Glory of [illegible]

[illegible]

Even as I depart from this world,
Everyone will say 'I knew him',
But the truth is, alas ! that none knew
Who the stranger was, or what he said, or whence he came !

—*IQBAL*

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GLORY OF IQBAL

By
SYED ABUL HASAN ALI NADVI

INTRODUCTION

Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi comes from a family that has been the cradle of learning and literature and guidance and instruction, uninterruptedly, for hundreds of years. All these worthy attributes are richly represented not only in his personality but also religious, literary and academic endeavours. The extraordinary command the Maulana enjoys over the Arabic language and his thorough and wise understanding of the spiritual and cultural problems of the Muslim World have lent a weight and importance to his views that, perhaps, cannot be equalled by any other Muslim theologist of modern India. The Maulana can, as such, be described as the most distinguished ambassador of the Muslim *Millet.*

I suppose Maulana Nadwi is the first religious scholar to have studied with profound keenness and enthusiasm the life and thought of Iqbal, indubitably the greatest and most representative Urdu poet of the 20th Century. Or else, theologicians are generally prone to approach everything modern warily and circumsceptly. It is essential, and a happy augury, for the Ulema themselves to try to understand Iqbal for now both life and religion are going to be viewed and evaluated in the manner and context laid down by him. The Maulana is aware of the needs and urges of the modern mind. He pays attention as well as respect to them. Identical was the attitude of another celebrated product of the Nadwa, Syed Sulaiman Nadwi. Otherwise, there is no dearth of people interested in religion and morality who are incapable of distinguishing between the modern mind and their own mentality.

It is not easy to appreciate the collective mental, moral, social and spiritual qualities of the *Millet* and the worth and value of the gifts bestowed by it upon mankind without a serious and respectful study of Hali and Iqbal. It is the benefaction of the love of the Prophet that has invested their works with immortality. *N'at-goi*[1] is as difficult and sublime an art and act of devotion as lofty and benevolent is the personality to which it owes its existence. It is admitted even by a poet like 'Urfi who, in his poetical self-conceit, cares little for anyone's eminence and, in the support of his claim, repeatedly produces the testimony of the tablet and the pen but when he enters the valley of *N'at* emphasizes the need of caution and wakefulness at each step.

Hurry not, O 'Urfi, it is the pathway of *N'at*.

Or,

Slowly! thou art treading on the edge of the sword.

And again :

Beware ! one cannot on the same harp sing,
Praises of the Prophet and eulogy of Cyrus, Jamshed.

It is not the peculiarity of the poets alone but with every Muslim the criterion of religious and cultural worthiness is the extent to which his life and character are imbued with warm affection for the Prophet. For the concept of love of the holy Apostle we are indebted to *Milad-Namas*[2] and *Milad-Khwans*[3] but it goes to the credit of Hali and Iqbal that they lifted it from the level of an emotional sensation to that of a living desire to understand, acquire and preserve the high ideals of Islam and

1. ***N'at*** is poem in praise of the holy Prophet. *N'at-goi* is the art of writing it.
2. & 3. ***Milad*** literally means 'birth' or 'birthday'. Among the Muslims the term is applied *par excellence* to an oration or discourse on the birth and doings of the Prophet. ***Milad Nama*** is the book containing it and ***Milad-Khwan*** is the reciter or narrator thereof.

the *Millet*. The good fortune to respect and observe the commands of God and the sacred Apostle is a Divine gift but to explain and publicise these injunctions and to impress them upon the hearts and minds of the people has fallen to the lot of the inspired poets to whose "sweet word" Iqbal has alluded in his inimitable style in the following verse :

Gabriel is Yours, Mohammad Yours, Yours the Quran,
But this sweet word Your interpreter or mine ?

This is the great poetry which is undying and imperishable like the holy Scriptures since it is their creature as well as interpreter. It blends religion with culture and culture with religion and the two with life and keeps them fresh, integrated and dynamic. Similar is the place of Iqbal in Urdu poetry. The fervour and earnestness with which Hali in *'Arz-i-Haal* and *Musaddas* and Iqbal in *Zarb-i-Kalim* and some other poems cry to the "noblest of the noble Apostles" and are seen in the presence of the "mark of Mercy" belongs to the realm of higher literature not only in Urdu but world poetry. What a fortuitious circumstance it is that the honour of carrying the message of Iqbal to the Arabs, in the Arabic language, has gone to Maulana Nadwi !

From *Nuqoosh-i-Iqbal*[1] or *Rawa-i-Iqbal*[2] one can obtain a correct idea of the charm and brilliance with which the Maulana has expressed his views and feelings on the life and art of Iqbal and on some of his most popular poems and Urdu masterpieces, particularly *Armughan-i-Hejaz*. The sands of Arabia "soft as silk under our feet", the imaginary journey of an earnest adorer of the Prophet like Iqbal to the blessed city of Medina, the trotting of the camel on the pitch and timbre of "Hurry not, for the destination is near", the ecstatic representation of innermost

1. The title of the Urdu version of the book.
2. The title of the Arabic version.

thoughts and sentiments in different ways and the coaxing of the camel to tread in harmony with them—to cast all this into exquisite Arabic, while preserving the emotional richness of the whole event, of trotting and conversing, bears an eloquent testimony to the wonderful mastery of the Maulana over Arabic expression and idiom.

Long ago I had an opportunity to hear a talk by Allama Iqbal at Lahore. The theme was something like this: Why was Islam revealed in Arabia? The Allama observed that the desert-wandering Arabs were never civilised. Since civilisation eventually led to the downfall of a people the trust of Islam could not be placed in the hands of a community that could fall a prey to the dissipation and luxuriousness that inevitably followed in its wake. Thus, whenever Muslims, outside Arabia, would be caught in the grip of decay and ruin they would look to that desert land and its sturdy, nomadic people for warmth, light and movement. Today, this statement comes to my mind. I have nothing against the bedouin Arabs, "the sea was the playground of whose boats". But the vulgar ostentation of their rulers and other privileged classes and the extent to which they have fallen in the esteem of the world is excessively shameful and distressing.

All the same, it is a source of encouragement that the religion which once had "invited Caesar and Chosroes" and whose followers had conveyed the call of peace, truth and magnanimity to the four corners of the world—the same forgotten message is now being revived and taken back to the Arabs through the "son of a Syed" by someone who was born in a Brahmin home and whose ancesters used to worship the idols. It remains to be seen how not only the Arab countries but the entire Islamic World responds to it and derives freshness and vitality from the soul-stirring declaration that the "Arab World is from Mohammad of Arabia". Did the remark of the Leader of the Arabs (the holy Prophet) that "I feel a cool breeze coming from the direc-

tion of Ind" really convey the glad tidings of this delightful circumstance? But who can tell what the concept of the Arab World is among the Arabs—of Mohammad of Arabia or Arab disunity and misrule?

Like the *Nʿat* of the sacred Prophet the new dimension and sublimity Iqbal has given to the tragedy of Karbala and martyrdom of Imam Husain also makes a valuable contribution to Urdu poetry. He made a new experiment with the significance the composition and recitation of *Marsia*[1] enjoy in our life and literature and gave a new validity to it. A new symbol of "the station of Shabbir"[2] was, thus, introduced in Urdu literature and it became immediately popular. What was till now a limited concept became boundless.

Sands of Iraq are waiting, Arabia's sowing-field is thirsty,
To Kufa, Syria and Egypt give again the blood of Husain.

—

Strangely plain and colourful is the story of *Harem*,
Its beginning is Ismail, Husain the end.

—

The station of Shabbir is truth everlasting,
Ways of Kufa and Syria change from time to time.

—

Not one Husain in the caravan of Hejaz is found,
Tresses of Tigris and Euphrates though are lustrous still.

—

Love is the truthfulness of Khalil, fortitude of Husain is love,
In the battle of life Badr and Hunain are love.

1. An elegy particularly one written or recited in commomeration of the martyrdom of Husain and his companions at Karbala.
2. The name of Husain.

A vivid description is found in the poems of Hali and Iqbal of the injustice generally done to women from the days of old and the woeful disregard of their honour and welfare, or of the improper use to which they have been putting the liberty that has come to them owing to the sudden dissolution of ties and removal of restraints after the two World Wars. Iqbal saw their abasement in permissiveness. It is impossible to disagree with what he says in their praise and glorification in *Zarb-i-Kalim* and other poems.

Colour in the portrait of Universe is from woman,
From her warmth the inner warmth of life;
In glory her dust is greater than Plaedias,
Each glory is the hidden pearl of her shell;
Dialogues of Plato she could not write,
Yet Plato's spark by her flame was broken.

At the end of *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* the poet declares the human race to be dependent on motherhood and upholds "the way of Hazrat Fatma" as the perfect model for Muslim women for three reasons: firstly, because she is the daughter of the sacred Prophet, "the Mercy to the Worlds," secondly, because she is the wife of Ali Murtuza, "the disperser of difficulties", and, thirdly, because she is the mother of Imam Husain, "the leader of martyrs." No better and more enlightened proclamation of the rights and duties of women can, perhaps, be found anywhere.

Verses, lines and phrases, moulded into shape with superb skill and amazing insight, in which Iqbal has commented on the various problems, events and personalities of his own and the earlier times constitute an invaluable addition to Urdu poetry. This voice, style and distinctiveness is rarely found among Urdu poets whose works, sometimes, include laboriously composed verses and even whole poems.

Iqbal's poetry is wholly free from the redundant and the superficial. It shows how evolved his taste was and how original his mind which could effortlessly transform the commonplace

into the exceptional. Conscious as he was of the superior he could not settle with anything less. I wonder to what wretched state the new experiments and movements that have become so common in literature would have brought down Urdu poetry in these days of mediocrity, lowness and disruption, when all the traditional values are being distorted or rejected disdainfully, had Ghalib, Hali, Akbar and Iqbal not imparted solidity and permanence to its lineage, viewpoint and criterion of merit. In form and substance, thought and theme, and style and diction Iqbal has set a standard that is not easy to emulate.

Followers of a particular school are inclined to suggest that Iqbal preaches the falconic cult of bloodshed and seeks to foist the individual on the society. It is an old criticism but can be answered easily. How can an ardent admirer of the "Mercy to the Worlds" (the holy Prophet) support or advocate the dogma of cruelty and violence? As for Iqbal's deep devotion to the Prophet ample evidence of it is available in *Nuqoosh-i-Iqbal*. And in order to understand fully the nature of relationship between the individual and society and their mutual obligations and responsibilities one will have to study *Asrar-i-Khudi* and *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* carefully. Iqbal has stressed a two-fold education of the individual, one is his capacity as an individual and the other as a member of the community. Or, in other words, as long as the individual and the community do not act together, in thought and in deed, for a noble purpose a strong and healthy society cannot come into being. Refinement, wisdom and ambition, upon which the society depends for its existence and advancement, begin with the individual and end with the community. The instruction of both is aimed not at keeping them apart but bringing them together and producing in them the identity of aim and purpose. Without the guidance and leadership of the individual society is bound to go under. It becomes as dangerous as its state is pathetic. Education is imparted to the individual so that he can lead the community on the straight

path and not for making it an instrument of his selfish ends. The bond between the individual and society, as envisaged by Iqbal, is such that it keeps them united and safe from each other's highhandedness.

In their support the critics cite some of Iqbal's verses in which he has spoken of the chase of the pigeon by the falcon—"Charging, turning and charging again"—or the worthlessness of leadership without power—"Without the rod Kalimi[1] is a meaningless act". But, with it, the fault-finders ought also to keep in mind the warning and exhortation Iqbal never tires of administering.

On life's battleground develop the character of steel,
In love's bedchamber become soft like silk.

Life and times being what they are, can there be a more reliable formula for living with peace, honour and freedom? Humility without strength is the virtue of a beggar. It is our duty to be strong. Misuse of force is cowardice which is another name for cruelty. The disperser of difficulties is the individual, not the community. Of the futility of *Kalimi* without the rod a most conspicuous example in the modern days is the United Nations.

Maulana Nadwi is an erudite scholar and an expert judge of literary and poetical merit. He also possesses an enlightened mind. His laudation and elegant interpretation of Iqbal confirms the view I have held for long that his philosophy is the scholastic theology of the twentieth century which will remain fresh and sound for ages to come because it has been cast in magnificent poetry. Iqbal's enlightened, scholarly and poetic exposition of the beliefs, practices and traditions of Islam has made a deep mark on Muslim society. A healthy and purpose-

1. Kalim is the name of Moses. *Kalimi*, here, may be said to denote Moseshood.

ful awakening like it has scarcely been brought about by the scholastic theology of anyother period. Some people, undoubtedly, have not been moved as powerfully by reading religious books directly as by learning about the same truths through Iqbal's verses so much so that the Muslim theologians who were reluctant to accept some of the views expressed by Iqbal in his well-known *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* became readily convinced when they read or heard about them in his poems as if those concepts and doctrines had been revealed to them straightaway.

I trust the Maulana will not differ with me in the opinion that the poetry of Iqbal is the scholastic theology of the present century.

(Prof.) Rasheed Ahmad Siddiqi

1

MY ACQUAINTANCE WITH IQBAL AND HIS ART

Before I attained the age of adolescence Iqbal had established himself as a poet of distinction. Many of his verses had become household phrases. He was already a vogue. Perhaps no poet has captured the imagination of his generation so powerfully as Iqbal did. He had a tremendous impact on his age and it is not surprising, therefore, that I was drawn to his poetry while still young and remained attached to it ever-after.

There can be many reasons why people like great poetry. The most important and common of these, perhaps, is that people find in it an experience similar to their own hopes and ideals. And man being basically egocentric he is attracted by all that reflects his inner urges and speaks the language of his heart. I do not exclude myself from the application of this maxim. Maybe, I admired Iqbal because I found him very close to my ideas and feelings. I felt that through his verses he gave expression to what really was passing in my own mind. What attracted me most to his poetry was the message of love, high aspiration and faith it carried, a message that was rare in the works of contemporary poets. My own emotional make-up is such that these three attributes can be said to form its nucleus. I feel instinctively drawn to any movement or literature which upholds the virtues of magnanimity and deepheartedness and gives the call of Islamic revival, which stimulates the desire

for the development of Self-hood and the conquest of 'the inner and the outer worlds' and which promotes the feelings of love and fidelity, fosters religious consciousness and encourages a deep faith in God and in the greatness of Prophet Mohammad and the universality and eternity of the message he brought. I found all this in Iqbal's poetry. I admired him particularly as a champion of human equality and brotherhood, as envisaged in Islam, and a believer in the essential nobility of the Muslim. I also admired him as a fearless critic of the Western materialistic civilisation and a valiant fighter against narrow nationalism and crude parochialism.

I began reading his poetry while still a child and as I grew up I tried to translate some of his verses into Arabic. I had not read anything of his poetry except the Urdu poems contained in his collection called *Bang-i-Dara* (The Caravan Bell). Meanwhile, there had appeared two of his collections in Persian but I had not yet learnt to appreciate that language.

I met him for the first time in 1929 when I was sixteen years old. I happened to visit Lahore which at that time was a great centre of learning and culture. It was on a hot summer day that Dr. Abdullah Chughtai, Professor of Islamic Studies in the Punjab University, took me to Iqbal and introduced me to him as a fervent admirer of his poetry. Dr. Chughtai also mentioned my father, the late Maulana Hakim Syed Abdul Hai Hasni, whom Iqbal knew well through his valuable book *Gul-i-Rʿana* which had just been published and become immensely popular in literary circles all over the country. In that meeting I presented to him a copy of my rendering of his poem *Chand* (The Moon) into Arabic. Iqbal was pleased to read it and then he asked me a few questions about some Arab poets probably to assess the extent of my scholarship. I came away greatly impressed by his simplicity, sincerity and humility.

During the period between 1929 and 1937 I often visited Lahore and stayed there for months but did not feel like disturb-

ing the great poet, believing that there was no need to hurry as he would remain for long among us. Besides, I am rather shy of meeting great men and my own pre-occupation with studies was, also, partly responsible for putting off the visit.

His two other collections of Urdu poems were published during those days. They appeared quite some time after the poet had stopped writing in Urdu and taken to Persian. Both of these volumes were richly representative of Iqbal's poetic genius and erudite scholarship. At that time I liked *Zarb-i-Kalim* (The Stroke of the Rod of Moses) more but later *Bal-i-Jibril* (The Wing of Gabriel) became the favourite with me and in the present book I have drawn mostly from it.

I was then a teacher in Nadwat-ul-Ulema of Lucknow and used to share my room with the late Maulana Masood Alam Nadwi who was a distinguished scholar of Arabic and the Editor of *Al-Zia* brought out by the same institution in that language. We used to read Iqbal together. My late lamented friend was an ardent admirer of Iqbal and we both did not feel happy over the fact that Tagore was better known in the Arab World than him. Tagore had found many admirers among men of letters in Syria and Egypt. We used to hold ourselves responsible for it. We had done nothing to introduce Iqbal to the Arabic speaking peoples. Whenever we saw an Arabic journal praising Tagore and his poetry (and we used to read these journals regularly) our resolve to translate Iqbal's poems into it grew stronger. We began to regard it a duty and a trust.

It so happened that I had another meeting with the illustrious poet a few months before his death. It was a long meeting, worthy of being remembered. On 22nd November, 1937 I visited Iqbal with my uncle, Syed Talha Al-Hasni, and his son, Syed Ibrahim Al-Hasni. The poet was confined to his house owing to a long and protracted illness which ultimately proved fatal. Inspite of it he received us with great warmth

and we stayed with him for over three hours. His old and devoted servant, Ali Bux, fearing that the strain might prove too much for his ailing master, came in a number of times and tried to stop him from over-exerting himself but the Allama ignored his advice and went on talking to us. His heart seemed to have opened up and he freely expressed his views on various subjects. Speaking of the pre-Islamic Arab poetry the poet remarked that he admired its realism and vitality and the spirit of chivalry and heroism it breathed and also recited a few verses of Hamsa. He said Islam enjoined upon its followers resolute action and love of reality and added that positive sciences were nearer to Islam in their rejection of philosophical speculation. For two centuries the Muslims kept alive this tradition and remained steadfast in faith, morality and active endeavour till under the impact of alien thought, mainly Hellenistic, the whole of the East was intellectually crippled. It became a 'sick man'. Iqbal remarked that the renaissance of Europe was possible only when it had thrown off the yoke of Greek metaphysics and turned its attention to useful and more productive branches of learning. But in the present age problems arose which set Europe also on the path of reaction. The Arab temperament, he went on, was most suitable for Islam but Hellenistic thought, unfortunately, did the same to Islam what it had done to Christianity in Europe. It overpowered both the religions.

With regard to Sufism (Islamic mysticism) Iqbal deplored the ideological intemperateness of the Muslim mystics and observed that while the Companions of the sacred Prophet took delight in horsemanship and martyrdom the Sufis revelled in *Sama'* (music) and *Wajd* (ecstasy). Talking of the resurgence of Islam in India he praised the efforts of Sheikh Ahmad Sarhindi, Shah Waliullah Dehlavi and Emperor Aurangzeb. But for them and their endeavours, he said, Islam would have been swamped by Indian philosophy and culture.

He spoke of the demand of Pakistan (it should be noted that

Pakistan was originally his idea which materialised in 1947 after his death) and remarked that a people without a homeland could neither preserve their faith nor develop their culture. The preservation of religion and culture was dependent on political power. Hence, Pakistan was the only solution to the problem of Indian Muslims including their economic difficulties. In this connection he also referred to the Islamic institutions of *Zakat* (regular charity) and *Baitul Mal*[1].

About the immediate future of Muslims in India he told us that he had drawn the attention of some Muslims Princes to the need of the preaching and propagation of Islam among non-Muslims. He had also been laying stress on the religious reform and uplift of Muslims, the promotion of Arabic language and the establishment of a World (Muslim) Bank. It was, further, necessary to have a first-class daily English newspaper of Muslims for supporting their cause and lending strength to their voice. But, he sorrowfully added, the Princes paid no heed to his advice. They did not appreciate the gravity of the situation and the significance of the changes that were taking place in the world. They were selfish, petty and shortsighted.

The poet wanted to go on with the conversation but we felt that in view of his illness it would be better to depart. So we said good-bye to him and left. We came away from Lahore within a few days. This was our last meeting.

I distinctly remember that when I asked his permission to translate some of his poems into Arabic he expressed his pleasure and readily acceded to my request. I read to him some of my Arabic renderings of verses from *Zarb-i-Kalim*. He told me that Dr. Abdul Wahab Azzam (of Egypt) was also thinking of

1. Meaning the Public Treasury or Exchequer, into which payment on various accounts are made, and according to the sources from which they are derived, applicable to the support of different classes of persons.

translating some of his works. Six months later when I heard of his death, on April 21, 1938, my resolve to undertake a study of his life and art became firmer. I wrote about it to my friend, Maulana Masood Alam, who was then at Patna. We exchanged condolences on the death of the magnificent poet and decided to combine our efforts in the execution of the task. He offered to write on the personality and message of Iqbal (for, as he said, he was not very good at translating) and left the translation of his poems into Arabic to me. The work, thus, began. Maulana Masood Alam wrote a stimulating article on Iqbal which appeared in *Al-Fatah* of Cairo, a journal edited by my old friend, the late Mohibuddin Khatib. I also wrote an article on Iqbal's life which was broadcast after sometime by the Saudi Arab Radio. But after this, owing to various reasons the work remained suspended for ten years.

In 1950, I visited Arabia, Syria and Egypt. During my stay there, which extended for over a year, I wrote a few papers on Iqbal, his thought and art, and read them at Darul Uloom and the University of Fuad (now known as the University of Cairo). I wrote, in 1956, in Syria another article entitled, *Mohammad Iqbal in the Medina of the Prophet,* which was broadcast by the Damascus Radio. But, somehow, I could not persuade myself to take up the translation of Iqbal's poems. One of the reasons, perhaps, was that Dr. Abdul Wahab Azzam had already begun it. Owing to his mastery of both the Persian and Arabic languages and intellectual rapport with Iqbal he was most suited for the job. But, as a couple of collections of his translations[1] saw the light of day, some of my friends said that they lacked the moving quality of Iqbal, his warmth and sparkle, and did not adequately convey his thought and message. They were not

1. Entitled *Risalutul Mashriq* and *Zarb-el-Kalim.* Dr. Azzam has also rendeted into Arabic some portions of *Asrar-i-Khudi Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* and *Javed Nama.*

worthy of Iqbal's tremendous poetry. When I myself read them I felt that they did not suffer from any technical fault of prosody nor betrayed a lack of understanding of Iqbal. They were also a convincing example of the command Dr. Azzam enjoyed over Arabic expression. The main drawback with them was that by attempting a versified translation of Iqbal Dr. Azzam had failed to do justice both to himself and to the great poet. A good deal of the force, vitality and effectiveness of Iqbal's poetry was lost in the process. To add to it, there had crept into the translation a kind of vagueness and tortuosity which created a barrier between the reader and his response to poetry. It would have been better if Dr. Azzam, who was a noted Arabic scholar and possessed a thorough knowledge of the Persian language as well, had first delved deep into the art and thought of Iqbal and then translated his work in the form of prose as he had preferred for articles published in the well-known Egyptian journals, *Ar-Risala* and *As-Siqafa*.

Every language has its own mood and flavour, its own idiom and way of expression, the roots of which can be traced back to history and culture. If this basic truth is lost sight of in translation much of the charm and fire of the original text will be destroyed. Nevertheless, by translating some of Iqbal's poems into Arabic verse Dr. Azzam has rendered a great service to Islam and to the Muslim literary world for which he deserves a rich measure of praise and the eternal gratitude of the scholars of Islamic thought and literature. The translation bears an eloquent testimony to his deep learning and earnestness. There is no doubt that the soul of Iqbal will be happy over this labour of love.

My multifarious activities and scholastic pre-occupations over-shadowed the desire of translating Iqbal till it was stirred by an event. I read an open letter addressed to me by the renowned Arab scholar, Dr. Ali Tantanawi, in the pages of *Al-Muslimoon* in which he had asked me to introduce Iqbal to the

Arab World. It read : "Will you translate some selected poems of Iqbal into Arabic so that we can appreciate properly the greatness of his poetry and message?...............The few Arabic translations that are available have not succeeded in giving us a correct picture of Iqbal, his structure of thought and the grandeur of his poetry. Will you, therefore, include this service among the tasks you have set before yourself and convey to the Arab World the freshness and fragrance of Iqbal's poetry to which upto now it has remained a stranger and open the gates of this delightful garden for us also, and, thus, enrich the Islamic literature?"

I could not but respond to this appeal with enthusiasm. The translation of the poem, *Masjid-i-Qartaba* (the Mosque of Cordova), was completed in one sitting and I felt a renewed urge to go ahead with the job which it was not possible to ignore. This set the process and soon a number of articles were written and many other poems translated.

I must make it clear that I do not regard Iqbal to be a great religious leader, a doctor of divinity or a man of unquestionable piety and dutifulness to God nor am I inclined to be hyperbolic in the appreciation of his poetry as the case is with some of his more enthusiastic admirers. I believe that Hakim Sunai, Fariduddin Attar and Jalaluddin Rumi, the Seer, were far ahead of him in these respects. In his *Six Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* there occur interpretations of certain Islamic concepts with which I do not agree. I do not hold the view that none had understood Islam better than him and reached its true spirit. What I have felt throughout my life is that he was an earnest student of Islamic theology, culture and philosophy who regularly kept in touch with the better known Muslim theologians of his time and sought their advice. His letters to Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri, Maulana Syed Sulaiman Nadwi and Maulana Masood Alam Nadwi are illustrative of his humility and keenness for knowledge.

There are certain aspects of Iqbal's unique personality which do not go well with the profundity of his art and learning and the magnificence of his message. Perhaps he did not get an opportunity to overcome these failings. All the same, I believe Iqbal was a poet whom God had inspired to lend articulation to certain truths and doctrines, in relation to current times, that had not been set forth by any other contemporary poet or thinker. He was a staunch believer in the permanence of the call of Prophet Mohammad, in the inherent strength and capacity for leadership of the Muslim community and in the insolvency of modern ideologies and political, social and economic systems and this had imparted lucidity and maturity to his thought and led to the growth and development of his individuality. In this respect he was even better than the doctors of Islamic theology who are ignorant of Western thought and culture and possess little awareness of its real aim and purpose.

I must admit that I find Iqbal a poet of faith, love and deep-heartedness. Whenever I read him I am stirred to the depths of my being. His poetry opens a new vista to my imagination and fills me up with an intense ardour and enthusiasm for Islam. This, I think, is the real worth and significance of Iqbal's poetry.

Another incentive to translate Iqbal into Arabic was provided by the abject surrender made by the Arabs to the materialistic civilisation of the West. I had seen how the Islamic World was standing at the crossroads of ancient and modern Paganism. On one side of it was exaggerated nationalism and, on the other, godless Communism, and the baneful effects of both could be felt in its literature, thought and behaviour. Writers who could understand the significance of the message the Arabs gave to the world and devote their mental capabilities for launching a ceaseless war against the enveloping darkness and the intellectual apostasy that was strengthening its hold on

the educated classes were becoming scarce among the Muslims.

Viewed against this background the importance of Iqbal became greater. Far away from the cradle of Islam he was born in a newly converted Brahmin family and in a country that was under the political and cultural domination of the West. He received education at some of the most outstanding centres of Western learning and yet his faith in the message of Mohammad (Peace be upon whom) grew deeper. He came to believe more fervently in the high destiny of the Muslim *Millet.* The vindication of Islam and repugnance for the Western thought and civilisation became a second nature with him. He utilised freely his enormous gifts of heart and intellect in that direction and became a symbol of the poetry of faith, vision and reflection. His ideas produced a tumult in the stagnant waters of the sub-continent and waves of thought and feeling rising from here swept the shores of Arabia and the entire Islamic World.

I, therefore, felt that the rendering of Iqbal's poems into Arabic was the best intellectual offering we could make to the rising generations of Islam and the up-and-coming Arab youth. In presenting the book I trust that it will be helpful in breaking the mental apathy and listlessness of Muslims and setting a new trend of thought among them.

2

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Iqbal was born at Sialkot in the Punjab on February 22, 1873. His ancestors, who were Kashmiri Brahmins, had embraced Islam two hundred years before. From that time the spirit of piety and godfearingness had come to rule over the family. Iqbal's own father was a devout Muslim with a Sufistic bent of mind.

He received his early education in Sialkot. After passing the Entrance Examination from a local school he joined the Intermediate College where he was lucky to have as his teacher Shamsul Ulema Mir Hasan, a great Oriental scholar. Mir Hasan had a special aptitude for imparting his own literary taste and distinctive manner to his pupils. Under the influence of this great teacher Iqbal, too, was drawn towards Islamic studies which he regarded to be such an outstanding favour that he could not forget it all his life.

Passing on to the Government College of Lahore Iqbal did his graduation with English Literature, Philosophy and Arabic as his subjects. It was there that he came into contact with Prof. Arnold and Sir Abdul Qadir (whose Urdu magazine, *Makhzan*, was, in those days, held in the highest esteem among the periodicals of its kind). Iqbal's poem, *Chand* (Moon), and other early poems appeared in the same journal in 1901 and were acclaimed by critics as cutting a new path in Urdu poetry. It did not take him long to win recognition as a rising star on

the firmament of Urdu literature.

In the meantime he had done his M. A. in Philosophy and was appointed as a Lecturer in History, Philosophy and Political Science at Oriental College, Lahore. From there he moved on to Government College to teach Philosophy and English literature. Wherever Iqbal worked or taught, his verstality and scholarship made a deep impression on those around him.

Iqbal proceeded to Europe for higher studies in 1905 and stayed there for three years. He took the Honours Degree in Philosophy and Economics from the Cambridge University and also taught Arabic at the University of London in the absence of Prof. Arnold. From England he went to Germany to do his Doctorate in Philosophy from Munich and then returned to London to qualify for the Bar. He also served as a teacher in the London School of Commerce and passed the Honours Examination in Economics and Political Science. During his stay in Europe Iqbal not only read voraciously but also wrote and gave lectures on Islamic subjects which added to his popularity and fame in literary circles.

The poet returned to Lahore from Europe in 1908. While his ship was passing through the Mediterranean Iqbal burst into tears at the sight of Sicily. He said :

Now weep blood, oh eyes !
For the tomb of Arab civilisation stands there in sight.

Iqbal had won these academic laurels by the time he was 32 or 33. He practised as a lawyer from 1908 to 1934, when ill-health compelled him to give up the practice. But due to his multifarious activities he could not give undivided attention to law. In fact, his heart was not in it and he devoted more time to philosophy and literature than to legal profession. He attended the meetings of Anjuman Himayat-i-Islam regularly at Lahore and it was at one of its annual functions that he read the epoch-making poem *Shikwa* (The Complaint) and followed it up, a

year later, with *Jawab-i-Shikwa* (the Answer). Both of these poems sparkled with the glow of genius and made him immensely popular. They became the national songs of the *Millet*.

Iqbal wrote two other poems during these days, *Tarana-i-Hindi* (The Indian Anthem) and *Tarana-i-Milli* (The Anthem of the Muslim *Millet*), which also were very popular and used to be sung as symbols of National or Muslim identity at public meetings.

The Balkan Wars and the Battle of Tripoli, in 1910, shook Iqbal powerfully and inflicted a deep wound upon his heart. He was hurt, agitated and disillusioned and the sentiments of sorrow and indignation that were aroused in him took the form of unabating repugnance against Western Civilisation and European Imperialism. In this mood of anger and frustration he wrote a number of stirring poems which together with portraying the anguish of Muslims were severely critical of the West.

The spirit of change and revolt runs through all of his poems of that period such as, *Balad-i-Islamia* (the Lands of Islam), *Wataniat* (Nationalism), *Muslim*, *Fatma Bint Abdullah* (who was killed in the siege of Cyrenaica), *Siddiq*, *Bilal*, *Hilal-i-I'd* (The I'd Crescent), *Tahzib-i-Hazir* (Modern Civilization), *Din* (Faith) and *Huzoor-i-Risalat Maab Main* (In the Presence of the Sacred Prophet). In these poems he bitterly deplores the attitude of Muslim leaders who lay a claim to Islamic leadership and yet are devoid of a genuine spiritual attachment to the blessed Prophet. Iqbal is emphatic in his denunciation of leaders who undertake pilgrimages to the West but are ignorant of the Prophet and owe no real allegiance to him.

> At Prophet's mausoleum yesterday a distressed soul was crying,
> *Millet's* foundations Muslims of India and Egypt are distroying;
> Pilgrims of the shrine of West, however much they claim to be our leaders,

What can have we to do with them when they are ignorant of thee?

In the world of his dreams the poet presents himself in the court of the Prophet, the Prophet asks what has he brought for him and the wonderful offering the poet makes can be imagined from the following verses of imperishable beauty.

Like perfume you come from the orchards of the earth;
What bring you then to greet us with, what offering?
But I have brought this chalice to make my offering,
It holds a thing not to be found in Paradise.
See here, Oh Lord, the honour of thy followers glimmering,
The martyred blood of Tripoli, Oh Lord, is in this cup.

Then there came World War I with its tale of woe and disaster for Muslim countries. Iqbal was profoundly shaken by the tragic events. The genius had now passed through the formative period. Iqbal's perplexity had disappeared and he soon attained maturity as a poet, thinker, seer and crusader who could read the signs of tomorrow in the happenings of today, make predictions, present hard facts and unravel abstruse truths through the medium of poetry and ignite the flame of faith, Selfhood and courage by his own intensity of feeling and force of expression.

His ebullience and enthusiasm, bounteousness of heart and fluency of mood were now at their peak. *Khizr-i-Rah* (The Guide) occupies the place of pride among the poems he wrote during this period. Each quatrain of it is a masterpiece of artistry, reflection and realism. But *Tulu-i-Islam* (Dawn of Islam) is the 'mansion of Ghazal' the like of which can scarcely be found in Islamic literature.

Iqbal published his first collection of Urdu verses under the title of *Bang-i-Dara* (The Caravan Bell) in 1929, and, since then, it has held a place of honour in Urdu poetry and world poetry.

Its popularity has not suffered an eclipse nor effectiveness lost its edge. The period between the publication of *Bang-i-Dara* and Iqbal's death is generally accepted as marking the ripening of his thought and the widening of the frontiers of his learning. In the poems published after 1929 there is a complete equipoise between poet and seer, and poetry and philosophy are perfectly wedded. The collections of his Persian poems also appeared during that time.

Iqbal preferred Persian for poetic expression because its circle was wider than that of Urdu and in Muslim India it enjoyed the position of the second language. Apart from being the mother tongue in Iran and Afghanistan it was still spoken in larger areas outside India including Central Asia and Turkey. His Persian works, *Asrar-i-Khudi* (Secrets of the Self), *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* (Mysteries of Selflessness), *Payam-i-Mashriq* (Message of the East), *Zabur-i-Ajam* (The Testament of Iran), *Jawed Nama*[1] (The Song of Eternity), *Pas Che Bayad Kard Ai Aqwam-i-Sharq* (What to do then, O Nations of the East ?), and *Musafir* (Traveller) belong to the same phase of his life and so also his *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* which were extensively appreciated and translated into many languages. Nicholson rendered *Asrar-i-Khudi* into superb English and Academies were set up in Italy and Germany for the study of Iqbal's poetry and philosophy.

In 1927 the poet was elected to the Punjab Legislative Assembly and made important contributions to its deliberations. In 1930 he was elected to preside at the annual session of the Muslim League. It was in his Presidential Address to the Muslim League at Allahabad that Iqbal for the first time elaborated the idea of Pakistan. In 1930-31 he attended the Round Table Conference which met in London to frame a constitution for India. While in England he was invited by the Governments

1. It can also be translated as 'To His Son Jawed'.

of France, Spain and Italy to visit those countries. Iqbal accepted the offers of hospitality of Spain and Italy and delivered lectures on Islamic Art at Madrid. He also went to Cordova and had the distinction of being the first Muslim to offer prayers at its historical mosque after the exile of the Moors. Memories of the past glory of the Arabs and their 800 year rule over Spain were revived in his mind and his emotions were roused by what he saw. Iqbal has immortalised these moments of bitter grief in a poem of unsurpassed charm and poignancy. It depicts the cultural essence of Islamic Audalusia in words which evoke a ready response in the hearts of the readers. It seems that the past had come to live again in the imagination of the poet. The mosque laments over its desolation and pines for the genuflexion of the devotees, the sky of Cordova is eager to be filled again with the sound of *Azan*[1] and Spain is still shedding tears in the memory of its Islamic grandeur. The art and thought of Iqbal is seen at its best in this poem which is worthy of finding a permanent place in the higher literature of the world.

In Italy Iqbal was received by Mussolini who had read some of his works and was acquainted with his philosophy. They had a long meeting and talked freely to each other. France, too, was keen that the poet paid a visit to the University of Paris and also went to see the French colonies of North Africa but Iqbal's sense of self-respect did not permit him to accept the invitation. He declined saying that it was too small a price of the woeful destruction of Damascus.

The Universities of Cambridge, Rome and Madrid and the Roman Royal Society organised meetings in his honour. On his way back he also went to Jerusalem to attend the International Conference of Motamar-i-Islami and wrote his scintillating poem *Zauk-o-Shauq* (Ardour and Eagerness) during the journey.

At the invitation of King Nadir Shah Iqbal visited

1. Muslim Call to Prayer

Afghanistan in 1932. He was a member of the delegation of educationists which also included Sir Ross Masood and Allama Syed Sulaiman Nadwi. The King received the poet with great honour and met him privately as well during which he laid bare his heart. The two talked and wept. At the tombs of Mahmud Ghaznavi and Hakim Sunai Iqbal was overwhelmed with emotion and his tears again froze into a poem which he called *Musafir*.

The last phase of Iqbal's life was embittered by constant sickness till his health completely broke down and he was confined to bed. But as regards his creative activities this period was most productive. Till the last he kept in touch with every question of the day and continued composing beautiful verses like the following :

> There is a Paradise for the holy men of Harem,[1]
> There is a Paradise for those who dare,
> But tell the Muslims of Hindustan to cheer up,
> There is a Paradise to be doled out in charity too!

A few minutes before his death he recited these touching lines :

> The departed melody may return or not!
> The zephyr may blow again from Hejaz or not!
> The days of this Faqir have come to an end,
> Another seer may come or not!

Although Iqbal's illness was long and protracted the end was sudden and very peaceful. He breathed his last in the early hours of April 21, 1938, in the arms of his old and devoted servant, leaving behind a host of mourners all over the Islamic World. There was a faint smile playing on his lips which irresistibly reminded one of the last criterion he had laid down for a truthful Muslim.

> I tell you the sign of a *Momin*[2]—
> When death comes there is a smile on his lips.

1. The sacred enclosure at Mecca
2. Truthful believer

3

FORMATIVE FACTORS

Among the formative factors of Iqbal's personality which imparted to it a characteristic warmth and versatility there were some that had little to do with his high academical attainments. The depth, magnetism, loftiness and sincerity we find in his mental, moral, social and emotional make-up were related to that aspect of life which is known as belief and faith.

The educational institutions where Iqbal learnt the modern sciences did not alone have a hand in the development of his individuality. He, of course, went abroad for higher studies and drank deep at the wells of knowledge in England and Germany, and, in his days, he was the foremost authority on Western philosophy and civilization in the Muslim World and possessed a deep insight into both ancient and modern branches of learning. But if Iqbal had stopped at that and after having tasted the fruits gathered from the Western universities remained satisfied with their flavour he would not have been the subject of our study today nor would the world of Islamic literature be ringing with the melody of his verses. The Muslim mind, in that case, would not have opened so spontaneously to him and he would not have risen to such dizzy heights of literary eminence and popular esteem. No one can hope to attain this lofty position solely on the strength of intellectual accomplishments. For it a number of other conditions have also to be fulfilled which are as delicate as they are sublime. Had Iqbal not looked beyond

educational institutions he might have become an honoured professor or a well-known writer. He would have won fame as a poet or a scholar of Philosophy, Economics, History or Literature or made a name at the bar and become a judge of the High Court or secured some other elevated public office. But were Iqbal any of these things and no more, he would have gone the way of all other men of eminence and authority and his reputation would have faded into oblivion with the passage of time. The secret of Iqbal's fire and colour, the real source of the immortality of his message, was embedded far away from the traditional centres of learning. It lay in an 'institution' which is absolutely unique. It was here that Iqbal learnt what he tried to convey through the magic of his poems all his life.

You will, naturally, be anxious to know what this 'institution' was that gave rise to a superb poet like him. What subjects are taught there? What is the medium of instruction in it and of what stuff are its teachers made? Surely, the teaching staff of an institution which can produce a poet of the calibre of Iqbal must be of a very high order. I am definite that once you came to know of it you will try to gain admission into it and commit your training to the care of its wonderful guides and preceptors.

No one who received education in it was unsuccessful. No one who passes out of it can ever be lost. It is an 'institution' from which only leaders of thought, doctors of law and divinity, initiators of branches of learning and reformers and renovators emerge. What they write is prescribed for study in schools and colleges, students burn midnight oil over their works and commentaries are written of their treatises. Their views are widely discussed and theories expounded by them are examined in detail by scholars. In this 'institution' history is made, not taught. Here ideas and opinions are formulated, not analysed and remains and vestiges are produced, not sought and studied. It is the inner 'school' which is born with everyone

and remains with him till death. It is the 'institution' of the heart, the 'seminary' of conscience, where Divine education is imparted and spiritual development takes place.

Like many other naturally gifted men Iqbal, too, completed his education at this marvellous 'institution'. His character and personality, knowledge and learning, morality and disposition owed their development to the 'seminary' of the heart. As a study of his works will confirm, the internal school had a greater hand in the engendering of warmth and feeling and profundity and earnestness in his life than the external school. Iqbal's personality would never have been so fascinating and his intuition so keen had he not received education in it. Nor would have his message become the living flame that it was. In his poems he has frequently alluded to the teachers, mentors and benefactors of this 'seminary' and expressed his deepest gratitude to them.

All the five fundamental elements which nurtured and moulded Iqbal's individuality and carried it to fulfilment belonged to this inner 'school'.

Firstly, there was the attribute of belief and faith. It was Iqbal's chief preceptor and the main springhead of his vitality and wisdom. But Iqbal's faith did not consist of a soulless dogma or a mechanical formula of affirmation. It stood for a priceless blending of belief with love which enveloped his entire existence. His ideas and emotions, volition and will, likes and dislikes and friendship and enmity were governed by it. That is why, Iqbal believed so strongly in Islam and his love and devotion for the holy Prophet was illimitable. With him Islam was an eternal, everlasting religion outside of which mankind could not work out its destiny and the sacred Prophet the last of the minarets of guidance, the terminator of Apostleship and the leader and master of one and all.

> The Pathfinder, Last Messenger of God, master of all,
> Who on the road-dust bestowed the splendour of Sinai.

Iqbal was not dazzled by the top-layer glitter of the modern materialistic civilisation although he had spent many a long year right under the glow of the wisdom of the West. It was, again, due to his ardent love for the Prophet and immense spiritual attachment to him for only true love and genuine devotion can provide a shield for the heart.

The glare of Frankish[1] science could not confuse my vision,
For the dust of Medina and Najaf is the collyrium of my eyes.

What a curse modern learning is, I know,
Since I was cast in its fire like Khalil[2].
The Pharaohs plotted, and yet plot against me, what harm?
In my sleeve I possess the luminous hand[3] of Moses.
What wonder if the Plaedias or the high moon fall my prey,
For I have bound my head to the Prophet's saddle bow.

In *Asrar-i-Khudi* Iqbal also speaks of the intensity of his devotion and loyalty to the Prophet while discussing the basic constituents of the Muslim *Millat*, the supporting columns on which its life-structure is built. His poetic instinct is aroused to its peak when he talks about the sacred Prophet and verses begin to flow from his pen, freely and smoothly, as if the springs of love and fidelity had brust forth within him. We will refer to the lines given below to illustrate our point.

In the Muslim's heart is the name of Mohammad,
All our glory is from the name of Mohammad.

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1. Meaning Western or European, according to circumstances
2. Denoting Hazrat Ibrahim (Abraham) who was thrown into the fire at command of Nimrud.
3. An allusion taken from the luminous hand of Moses.

He slept on a mat of rushes,
But the crown of Chosroes was under his followers' feet.
He chose the nightly solitude of Mount Hira,
And he founded a nation, laws and government.
He passed many a night with sleepless eyes,
In order that the *Millet* might sleep on Chosroes' throne.
In the hour of battle, iron was melted by the flash of his sword,
In the hour of prayer, tears fell like rain from his eyes.
When he prayed for Divine help, his sword answerd 'Amen',
And extirpated the race of kings.
He instituted a new Law in the world,
He brought the empires of antiquity to an end.
With the key of religion he opened the door of this world,
The womb of the world never bore his like.
In his sight high and low were one,
He sat with his slave at one table.
The daughter of the chieftain of Tai was taken prisoner in battle,
And brought into that exalted presence;
Her feet in chains, her face unveiled,
And her neck bowed with shame.
When the Prophet saw that the poor girl had no veil,
He covered her face with his own mantle.
He opened the gates of mercy to his enemies,
He gave to Mecca the message, 'There's no blame on you today'.
We who know not the prison-walls of country,
Resemble sight, which is one though it be the light of two eyes.

We belong to Arabia and China and Persia,
Yet are the dew of one smiling dawn.
We are all under the spell of the eye of the cup-bearer of Medina,
We are united as wine and cup.
He burnt clean the distinctions of birth and race,
His fire consumed this trash and rubble.
The song of love for him fills my silent reed,
A hundred notes throb in my bosom.
What to speak of the praises I sing of him,
Even the block of dry wood wept at parting from him.[1]
The Muslim's being is where he manifests his glory,
Many a Sinai springs from the dust of his path.

Iqbal's passionate devotion to the sacred Prophet grew with the passage of time till during the last phase of his life if the name of the Prophet was mentioned in his presence or someone began to talk about the blessed cities of Mecca and Medina he became restless and could not control his tears. It was this feeling of spiritual attachment, this burning, all-consuming flame of ardour and yearning, which inspired him to compose verses of matchless beauty and excellence. He, for instance, beseeches God in these words :

Disgrace me not before the Master,
Call me to account away from his sight.

How superbly symbolic of love and loyalty these lines are !

The warmth and fervour, anguish and distress one experiences in Iqbal's poems had its roots in the perfection of faith and down-reaching earnestness of love. Whether it is a moving verse or a profound idea or any other form of high artistic or intellectual ability it is essentially the gift of faith and love and

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1- The reference is to the story of the pulpit that wept when it was changed and the sacred Prophet did not ascend it.

whatever evidence of the glory and greatness of man is found in history has its origin in the two basic attributes of the heart. A person who is devoid of these fundamental qualities is merely a lump of flesh and a community which cannot lay claim to this inner wealth is no more than a herd of cattle. The same is true of poetry as well. A poet who is not inspired by faith and love can, at the best, be only a rhymester. He may make rhymes but cannot write living poetry. When a book is devoid of it is a mere collection of pages. In the same way, if worship is not endowed with the spirit of faith and love it becomes an empty formality, a lifeless ritual. Life itself is not very much distinguishable from death if it fails to fulfil this condition. Worthless is the existence in which the spirits are dejected, the fountain-heads of poetry and literature are frozen and the zest for living is extinct. When things come to such a pass true faith and sincere love come to the rescue by reviving the nobler feelings and reactivising religious, moral and artistic sensitivity. Elegant, moving, heart-warming verses are, then, heard, deeds of super-human courage and endurance are performed and works of art and literature attain immortality. If love even penetrates into clay, water or stone it invests it with eternity as we find in the case of the Taj Mahal, Qasr-e-Azhar and the Mosque of Cordova.

> Works of creation are incomplete without the heart's warm blood,
> Music, an immature frenzy, without the heart's warm blood.

It is a folly to imagine that men of letters excel one another merely on the strength of their intellect and scholarship or that poets owe their success solely to natural aptitude, choice of words and abstruseness of meaning or that the eminence of a leader or reformer is related wholly to his political acumen, sagacity and eloquence. Their greatness stems primarily from the spirit of love and dedication without which no one's work can become the passion of his life, spread through every nerve and fibre of

his being and take commend of his heart, will and action. But when these attributes are present the identity of a poet, writer or reformer gets lost in his art or mission so that when he speaks he speaks with its tongue and when he writes he writes with its pen. The purpose, in short, becomes his destiny, engulfing his thought, feeling and everything.

The worst of the gifts of modern civilisation is materialism which, in its turn, breeds commercialism and self-indulgence. It is, basically, the outcome of the current system of education which is totally unrelated to man's inner needs. In consequence, our rising generations are becoming bankrupt from within and heading blindly towards ruin and destruction. Their hearts are bereft of the warmth of faith, of the restlessness of love, and of the joy of conviction, and the modern world has turned out to be a dull, drab and dreary affair in which there is neither life nor awareness, neither the sensation of joy nor the consciousness of sorrow. It can be compared to a dead and inert article in the hands of a tyrant who uses it as he likes.

Iqbal's poetry is strikingly different from that of other celebrated poets. It never fails to evoke warmth and movement, yearning and earnestness, pain and restlessness within us. It bursts upon us like a dancing flame, melting the chains of materialism and burning down the rotten heap of perverse social and moral standards. It reveals how strong is the faith of the poet, how tender is his heart and how restless his soul.

Another thing which moulded Iqbal's character was what is, today, present in every Muslim home but, alas, the Muslims themselves have ceased to derive light and wisdom from it. I mean the holy Quran which had exerted a tremendous influence on the life and philosophy of Iqbal. He had not been impressed so deeply by anyone nor moved so powerfully by any other book than the Quran. Since the faith of Iqbal was that of a 'convert' and he had not inherited it as a family bequest there was in him a far greater attachment to the Quran and keenness

to study it carefully than the so-called lineal Muslims customarily have. Iqbal's recitation of the Quran was not like that of any other Muslim. It has been related by the poet himself that he used to recite the Quran daily after the morning prayer. Whenever his father saw him reading it he would ask, "What are you doing?" "I am reciting the Quran", he replied. After sometime Iqbal made bold to say to his father, "You put the same question to me everyday and I give the same reply, and, then, you go away". Iqbal's father, thereupon, remarked, "I want to tell you that you should recite the Quran as if it was being revealed to you there and then". Since then Iqbal made it a point to read the Quran with an intelligent appreciation of its import and in such a way as if it was really being sent down to him at that very moment. He has, also, explained the significance of it in one of his verses.

> Unless the Book descends upon your spirit, no interpreter
> —Razi[1], nor he who wrote 'The Key'[2]—shall unravel the knot for you.

Iqbal devoted his whole life to the study of the Quran. He read the Quran, thought the Quran, and spoke the Quran. It was his most favourite book which opened new vistas of knowledge for him and imbued him with a fresh awareness and strength. As his study of the Quran progressed his mind attained greater loftiness and his faith developed further mellowness since it was an eternal Book, revealing transcendental truths and leading on to everlasting felicity. It is the master key which can open all the vaults of human existence; a complete, well-

1. A rationalising philosopher who is often placed by Iqbal in antithesis to Rumi.

2. *Kashshaf* (meaning the Key) which has been used in the original is the title of a well-known commentry of the Quran It was written by Allama Zamakhshri.

defined and all-embracing programme of life and a minaret of light in darkness.

The third factor was the realisation of the 'Self' or Ego. Iqbal has laid the greatest emphasis on the cultivation and growth of Selfhood. He believed that true development of the human personality could not take place without self-realisation. Unless the evolution of the Ego took place life must remain an empty dream, devoid of yearning and earnestness, ecstasy and intoxication.

> Delve deep into your buried Self, and find the clue to life,
> If you cannot be mine then be not, but be your own;
> World of soul—a world of fire, ecstasy and longing,
> World of body—a world of gain, fraud and cunning;
> The treasure of the spirit once gained is never lost again,
> The treasure of the body is a shadow—wealth comes and goes;
> In the world of soul I have found no Frankish rule,
> In that world no Sheikh or Brahmin I have seen;
> This saying of the Qalandar[1] poured shame and shame on me:
> When you kneel to another's might neither body nor soul is your own.

Besides thought-content, the sound-pattern and underlying earnestness of these verses are so enchanting that one feels like reading them again and again. Iqbal placed a great value on the disciplining of Selfhood and the cultivation of the Ego. According to him self-development taught to mankind the secrets of power and rule. Whether Attar or Rumi, Razi or Ghazali no one could achieve anything without it. It was the realisation of the

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1. Iqbal uses the *Qalandar* as a symbol for the evolved man who has realised in himself the truths of self-development.

truth of self-development that led Iqbal to prefer death to the livelihood which clipped the wings and arrested one's flight and to hold the beggar whose poverty possessed the character of the poverty of Hazrat Ali to be a more honourable person than Darius and Alexander. Only he who had attained the goal of self-realisation could have the courage to proclaim :

> The code of men of courage is truth and fearlessness;
> God's lions know not the cunning of a fox.

Iqbal's conception of Selfhood had become the essence of his being. His own existence was a glowing example of his idea of self-realisation. Patterns of self-dignity, self-reliance and self-development are most prominent on the leaves of the book of his life. In the verses reproduced below he exhorts to others what he practised himself till the dying day.

> If the kings know not their Sustainer they are beggars,
> And if the beggars do they are Darius and Jamshed;
> Freedom of the heart is sovereignty; stomach in death,
> The choice is yours: heart or stomach?

Awareness of the Self it was that protected Iqbal against intellectual capriciousness and literary waywardness which often induced our poets, writers and literateurs to rush to every pasture and to ramble in every valley, no matter whether it went well with their mental and moral outlook or not. They, consequently, remain strangers to themselves throughout their lives and end up in frustration. But Iqbal was a grand exception. He knew himself thoroughly from the first day and had made a correct assessment of his Individuality. With an intimate knowledge of his own character and personality he employed his gifts of heart and intellect to shake the Muslims out of their stupor and stir the spark of faith that was lying dormant in them. He used his redoubtable poetical ability to inculcate in them the spirit of freedom, strength and leadership.

Iqbal was a born poet Had he even tried to shun poetry he would not have succeeded. His poetry was a symbol of the

bleeding heart, of ardency, enthusiasm, profoundness and sensitive imagery. Iqbal was a magnificent poet who enjoyed a complete command over the art of verse-making. There was the fire of genius in him. His contemporaries not only acknowledged his greatness and admired the wonderful quality of his verses but were also impressed by the newness of his thought and the originality of his technique. He coined new similis and metaphors and introduced new symbols. He drew liberally upon English, German and Persian literature to enrich his art. It was not that there were no outstanding poets in India during the days of Iqbal. There was no lack of masters of verse among his contemporaries who were famous for the chastity of their style and their mastery of language and fluency of expression. What distinguished Iqbal from them was his poetic majesty, imaginative vivacity and intellectual artistry, and, to crown it all, there was his passionate devotion to Islam.

Iqbal was not a national poet. His poetic genius was not circumscribed by the frontiers of race or geography. He was not also one of the romantic poets who look only to wine and beloved for inspiration. His poetry, further, was not altogether soaked in wisdom and philosophy. He was imbued with the call of Islam and the message of the Quran. Just as the drafts of wind spread the fragrance of flowers and the electronic waves are used in the modern times to carry messages from one place to another Iqbal employed his poetic ability to preach and propagate the inward conviction which was dearest to his heart. There is no doubt that he awakened the people from deep slumber and rekindled the flame of faith in their breasts. And it was because Iqbal had discovered himself and made a correct judgement of his potentialities and put them to proper use.

The fourth element which went in the making of Iqbal's personality and endowing his poetry with sublimity, forcefulness and vitality also had nothing to do with study and scholarship. It was the sigh of the early hours of the morning. When the

world was asleep Iqbal used to get up and devote himself to lamentation and prayer. It lent a new energy to his mind, a new light to his heart and a new joy to his soul. Having thus re-equipped himself, mentally and spiritually, before the sun had risen he would offer matchless verses to the world.

In Iqbal's view early morning devotions were a most precious asset of life which even the greatest of scholars, ascetics and philosophers could not afford to neglect.

Attar or Rumi, Razi or Ghazali—whoever may be,
Nothing is attained without the pre-dawn wail.

Iqbal always left his bed very early whether he was at home or in a journey.

Sharp as a sword though the wintry air of Europe,
I gave up not the habit of early rising even there.

He even begged to God to take back from him whatever He pleased but not the joy of wailing at dawn.

Deprive me not of the joy of pre-dawn sigh,
Do not temper the indifference of Thy glance with mercy.

Iqbal wished to see his wailing and lementation, agony and restlessness, in the young people and prayed for the torment of his heart and his love and vision to be passed on to them.

Bestow on the youth the suffering of the heart,
Grant to it my love and vision!

In another poem he says:

Grant the youth my morning wail!
To the eaglets give again feathers and wings!
O Lord! I have but one wish—
Give to all and sundry the gift of my foresight!

The fervent wish and prayer of Iqbal did not go in vain. Today, in the whole of the Muslim World a new generation is emerging endued with true Islamic thought and understanding.

The fifth and the last factor was the *Mathnawi-i-Maanawi* of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi. This immortal Persian poem of

unequalled worth and effulgence was inspired by intuitive experience and spiritual animation. At the time of Maulana Rum the scholastic philosophy of Greeks was predominant in the Muslim World and the habits of pedantic reasoning and speculative hair-splitting had become so common that it was extremely difficult to cut a different path or open a new avenue of thought. Distressed at this melancholy state of affairs the Maulana began to write his *Mathnawi* which is an astounding treasure-house of literary sublimity, originality of meaning, wise parables and sagacious advice. Innumerable persons have been influenced by it and their mental and spiritual attitude has been transformed. It is a unique work of its kind in Islamic and world literature. When Iqbal came into contact with the godless and vulgarly materialistic doctrines of the West and the conflict between the matter and spirit within him reached the climax he turned to the *Mathnawi* for succour. It proved extremely helpful to him in the hour of inner confusion and perplexity and he began to regard the Sage of Rum an ideal mentor. He declared that the disentaglement of the knots of wisdom and intellect which had been made more complicated by Western materialism lay in the ethereal warmth generated by the Flame of Rum. It was by the Maulana's grace that his own vision had been illumined and, in his tiny receptacle, an ocean of knowledge and awareness had come to be contained.

In the heat of the Fire of Rum is your remedy,
On your intellect the Franks have cast their spell;
My eye is illumined by his grace,
By his munificence Jaihun[1] is contained in my ewer.

Time and again Iqbal makes known his deep love and regard for the Maulana whom he fondly calls the Sage of Rum.

The Sage of Rum, an enlightened mentor,
Leader of the caravan of love and ecstasy.

1. The name of a river of Turkistan.

In the company of the Sage of Rum have I learnt,
One fearless heart is worth a thousand wiseheads
muffled in a sack.

In the present age of crude materialism and soulless technology Iqbal awaits the appearance of another Rumi. He believes that the rust of materialism can be removed only in the furnace of love for which the Flame of Rum is needed once again.

From the flower-beds of Ajam no new Rumi arose,
Though the soil and water of Iran is the same, Oh
Saqi[2], and so is Tabrez.

But Iqbal is not despondent. He entertains high hopes from his desolate sowing-field.

Of his desolate sowing-field Iqbal shall not despair,
A little rain and the soil is most fertile, Oh Saqi!

These were the five factors that gave shape to Iqbal's personality and caused its development. All of them were the outcome of the instruction he received at the peerless 'institution' which endued the great poet, philosopher and humanist with a strong faith, a balanced mind and a lofty ideal and made him what he was.

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1. The word *Ajam*, frequently used by Iqbal, signifies what is foreign, outlandish, i. e., not Arabian or purely Islamic, and *par excellence* Persia, as the home of sophisticated speculation.
2. The Saqi, as V. G. Kierman remarks, was originally the page or cup-bearer of the Arabs, and later the hetaira of the Persians, the mistress who pours the wine. From the common symbolism of wine as truth, love as ispiration, the Saqi, the filler of the spiritual cup, comes to mean the leader, the spiritual guide, or even God. The word is often used in poetry with intentional ambiguity.

4

WESTERN CIVILIZATION

Towards the close of the 19th century Muslim young men began to be attracted by the Western education. They joined the universities founded by the British rulers. A happy consequence of it was that the fear of the ruling nation was dispelled from their hearts and cultural contacts with it were established. Muslims overcame their diffidence and set their feet confidently on the path of higher education. At the modern seats of learning and under the supervision of Western teachers they got the opportunity of seeing the West from close quarters and evaluating the fundamental characteristics of its civilization.

Through Western philosophy and literature the Muslims got acquainted with the mysteries of the Occident. They learnt to understand its intrinsically materialistic disposition and the arrogant nationalism underlying its collective consciousness. The other weaker aspects of the Western way of life and the signs of its inner bankruptcy and spiritual degeneration, too, were revealed to them and they realised how the finer qualities of human mind and character were not only lacking in it but also being deliberately neglected by its leaders. All the ruinous attributes that were eating into its vitals, but had been present from the beginning as a part of its nature, were now evident to them. Intellectual awakening and the resultant desire for action could not, however, be produced without a prolonged stay in Europe. A fearless and non-imitative mind was also needed, along

with an intimate knowledge of Western philosophy and civilisation to bring about the reaction.

When the hidden spark of faith was, at last, stirred the modern educated Muslims were seized with a strong sense of disappointment in respect of the West and a bold and healthy spirit of criticism was engendered in them which, nevertheless, was basically fair, logical and objective.

Iqbal was foremost among the intellectual critics of the West. It can, perhaps, be said that the modern educated Muslim classes have not produced a greater man of vision than him during the last hundred years. He was the most accomplished thinker of the modern East. Among the Oriental scholars no one can be said to have possessed the depth of Iqbal's understanding of the West and the courage and resoluteness of his judgement.

Iqbal had understood clearly the inherent weaknesses of Western thought and culture, its faulty and deficient features and the elemental perversity of its design. He had realised how disdainfully the Western mind dealt with transcendental truths and felt that its depravity was chiefly the outcome of the uncleanliness of the soul of the civilisation it represented. He says :

> Civilisation of the West is perversion of heart and mind,
> Since its soul could not remain unpolluted.
> When the soul loses its purity everything goes,
> Cleanliness of conscience, loftiness of mind, refinement of taste.

Inspite of the mighty empires the West had built and the glamour and enlightenment that were associated with it the Western society was seething with discontent. Steam and electricity had polluted its atmosphere. There was, of course, the electric light but it did not illumine the realm of thought nor contained a ray of celestial effulgence.

This unbounded luxury, this government, this trade,
But the heart in the unillumined breast unblest with peace;
Dark is the Frankish country with the grime of its machines,
This 'Valley of Blessedness and Hope' not worthy of Divine Splendour.
A civilisation sick before its prime, at its last gasp,
The Jews are likely to be the sole trustees of Christendom.

Iqbal refers, again and again, to the godless character of the Western philosophy of life whose foundation is laid on the intolerance of religion and ethics and the favourite pastime of which, during all the stages of history, has been the carving of new images. In the *Mathnawi, Pas Che Bayed Kard*, he says that this wicked Civilisation has been continually at war with men of Truth and spreading mischief by installing the idols of Lat[1] and Uzza[2] in the sacred enclosure of the House of Kaʿaba. By its sorcery the heart becomes dark and the soul is killed. It is the robber that strikes in broad daylight and leaves man a pauper morally, mentally and spiritually.

Of this civilisation of ungodliness beware !
At war which is with men of Truth;
The mischief-monger nothing but mischief breeds,
In the *Harem*[3] it re-instals the idols of Lat and Uzza.
By its sorcery the eye of the heart is sightless,
The soul thirsty with its barrenness;
The joy of eagerness it kills in the heart,
Nay, the heart itself it destroys.
The depradations of the old thief are for all to see,
Even the tulip cries, 'What have they done to my scar ?'

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1. & 2. Names of Idols worshipped by Pagan Arabs.
3. The sacred enclosure of the House of Kaʿaba at Mecca.

Annihilation of man is the profession of this Civilisation and trade and commerce its sole aim and occupation. As long as it is predominant in the world there will be no peace among men, no selfless love and no sincerity.

Europe, alas, is ignorant of this state,
With the light of Allah its eye does not see;
Nor between the allowed and the prohibited it makes a distinction,
Its wisdom is immature and mission incomplete.
It makes one community devour the other,
One sows the seeds, another reaps the harvest;
In snatching bread from the weak its wisdom lies,
And in taking away life from his brother's frame.

The target of the modern Civilisation is man himself who is the source of its energy and animation and the instrument of its commerce and industry. The mounting expenditures and the rising cost of living are the creations of Jewish cunning which have robbed mankind of the light of faith. Religion, culture and wisdom must remain a dream until the prevalent outlook on life is radically altered.

Annihilation of man is the business of modern civilisation,
And the cloak it uses is trade.
Thanks to the banks, these products of Jewish ingenuity,
The light of Truth from man has departed.
Till this system from the world is uprooted,
Religion, wisdom and culture must remain a dream.

Though young in years the Western Civilisation is gasping in the agonies of death and ready to disintegrate.

A Civilisation sick before its prime, at its last gasp,
The Jews are likely to be the sole trustees of Christendom.

If it does not die a natural death it will kill itself with its

own dagger. A nest built on a tender bough can but be fragile. The foundations of the Western Civilisation are weak and unstable. Its glass-house cannot withstand the onslaught of time. The technological adnancement of the West is a threat to it and the world.

> The arrant intellect that laid bare the treasures of nature,
> In its own nest is threatened by the lightning it released.

The world of profit, trade, deceit and turpitude is crumbling fast and a new world is struggling to take its place.

> But now a new world is born, the old world is dying,
> The world the dice-throwers of Europe have made a gambling den.

The Civilisation of the West is not lacking in lustre and the flame of life burns brightly in it but it does not possess a Moses to whom Divine inspiration may have come and a Khalil[1] who can break the idols and change the fire into a flower-bed.

In it the intellect thrives and flourishes but a corresponding withering away of love and other human emotions is also taking place. Even the so-called revolutionaries of the modern world do not have the courage to shake off the chains of convention and come out of their narrow shells. Their progressive outlook remains a slave to custom and usage.

> Remember the days I was in the tavern of the West,
> The cups of which glittered even more than the mirror of Alexander[2];
> To wine the intoxicated eyes of bartender, the creator,
> The glance of the cup-bearer to wine-drinkers, the Prophet.

---

1. Abraham
2. The allusion is to the magic mirror which Alexander the Great is supposed to have possessed.

Without a Kalim[1] whose splendour is, without a Khalil whose fire,
Reckless intellect the enemy of love's fortune.
Its atmosphere is devoid of the heat of impatient sigh,
And patrons without the stumble of an intoxicated soul.

Mankind is sick at heart because of Franks,
And life in perpetual turmoil.
To its own sword Europe has fallen a victim,
Under the sky the cult of atheism it founded.
Man's troubles all emanate from it,
Of humanity's hidden sorrow it is the cause.
Man is mere water and clay in its sight,
And life's caravan without a destination.

In the West there is, apparently, a profusion of the light of knowledge and science but, in fact, this 'Ocean of Darkness' is without the 'Fount of Life.[2]' The limit of its addiction to materialism is that in grandeur and elegance the buildings of the banks are far superior to those of the Churches. The whole edifice of its trade is based upon the profit of one man and the death of millions. Politics and government, knowledge and learning of which the West is excessively proud are meaningless concepts behind which there is no reality. The Western leaders suck the blood of men but preach equality and social justice from the platform. Poverty and unemployment, lewdness and intoxication are the gifts of the Western Civilisation to mankind. The achievements of the people who are devoid of Divine grace do not extend beyond the domains of steam and electricity. In a civilisation dominated by machines and characterised by exclusive preoccupation with material profit death of the heart, destruction of mutual understanding and sympathy and

1. The title of Moses.
2. The legendry river sought by Alexander.

extinction of human glory are certain.

Though Europe is radiant with the light of knowledge,
The 'Ocean of Darkness' is barren of the 'Fount of Life'.

In splendour, in seduction and in grace,
The buildings of banks outsoar the Houses of God.
In appearance it is trade, in reality gambling,
Profit for one, for thousands sudden death.
Science, Philosophy, College, Constitution,
Preach man's equality and suck men's blood.
Want and unemployment, lewdness and intoxication,
Are these mean triumphs of the Occident!
A nation unblessed by Divine Light,
Steam and electricity bound its works.

A more penetrating study of the Western Civilisation is found in Iqbal's *Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam.* Dwelling upon the out and out materialistic foundations of the Western cultural and intellectual design and the host of problems it has succeeded in creating for mankind in the different spheres of individual and collective existence Iqbal remarks:

"........Wholly shadowed by the results of his intellectual activity, the modern man has ceased to live soulfully, i. e., from within. In the domain of thought he is living in open conflict with himself: and in the domain of political life he is living in open conflict with others. He finds himself unable to control his ruthless egoism and his infinite gold-hunger which is gradually killing all higher striving and bringing nothing but life-weariness. Absorbed in the 'fact', that is to say, the optically present source of sensation, he is entirely cut off from the unplumbed depths of his own being. In the wake of his systematic materialism has at last come that paralysis of energy which Huxley apprehended and deplored........

"Modern atheistic socialism, which possesses all the fervour

of a new religion, has a broader outlook; but having received its philosophical basis from the Hegelians of the left wing, it rises in revolt against the very source which could have given it strength and purpose. Both nationalism and atheistic socialism, at least at the present state of human adjustments, must draw upon the psychological forces of hate, suspicion and close up his hidden sources of spiritual energy. Neither the technique of medieval mysticism nor nationalism nor atheistic socialism can cure the ills of despairing humanity.........

"It is only by rising to a fresh vision of his origin and future, his whence and whither, that man will eventually triumph over a society motivated by an inhuman competition, and a civilisation which has lost its spiritual unity by its inner conflict of religious and political values.[1]"

The Western society cannot sustain itself without savage competition and ruthless class-conflict. These are the two sources from which it derives its energy and dynamism. The division between political and religious values and the differentiation between matter and spirit have destroyed its organic unity. Like all men of insight and understanding Iqbal regards Capitalism and Communism to be the two branches of the same tree of materialism which, notwithstanding the fact that the former is Western in its origin and the other Eastern, join one another where the materialistic interpretation of reality and the circumscription of humanity are concerned. Depicting in *Jawed Nama*, an imaginary meeting with Jamaluddin Afghani Iqbal expresses the view through him that the West, after depriving itself of spiritual values and transcendental truths, is trying to seek the soul in the stomach though the soul has nothing to do with the physical structure of life and energy. Communism is not capable of looking beyond the belly and, at the utmost, it thinks in terms of the equality of stomachs. The

1. The Reconstruction of Religious Thought of Islam (1944) pp. 187-88

ideal of human brotherhood cannot be attained through economic equality alone. For it true love, high ethical standards and spiritual orientation are necessary.

The Westerners have lost the vision of heaven,
They go hunting for the pure spirit in the body.
The pure soul takes not colour and scent from the body,
And Communism has nothing to do save with the body.
The religion of that apostle who knew not truth,
Is founded upon equality of the belly ;
The abode of fraternity being in the heart,
Its roots are in the heart, not in water and clay.

In the same way, there is little to choose between Communism and Imperialism when it comes to greed, disorder, godlessness and exploitation. If life in Communism is *Khurooj* (production) in Imperialism it is *Khiraj* (taxation). Between the two stones poor and helpless man is being ground like a piece of glass. Communism is the enemy of religion and morality and arts and learning, while Imperialism is thirsting for the blood of the masses which it sucks from the rich and the poor alike. Both of these systems are motivated by materialism. In their outer forms they are fresh and radiant but inwardly dark and corrupt.

The soul of both of them is impatient and restless,
Both of them know not God, and deceive mankind.
One lives by production, the other by taxation,
And man is a glass caught between these two stones.
The one puts to rout science, religion, art,
The other robs the body of soul, the hand of bread.
I have perceived both drowned in water and clay,
Both bodily burnished, but utterly dark of heart.
Life means a passionate burning, an urge to make,
To cast in the dead clay the seed of a heart.

Iqbal is convinced that the Western Civilisation cannot

save the Islamic World. It can neither solve its problems nor give it a new lease of life. He asks how a civilisation which is itself in the throes of death can revive and resuscitate others.

Even the naked truth they cannot see,
Whose vision servility has blurred;
How can Iran, Arabia suck new life,
From West which itself is at the grave's edge?

The West has always ill-requited the East. It has returned beneficence with ingratitude, good with evil. Syria gave Christ to the West who preached piety and righteousness, compassion and kindness and clemancy and forgiveness but the West rewarded it with oppression, lewdness, intemperance and gambling.

To the Franks the dust of Syria gave,
The Apostle of chastity, compassion, love.
The Franks to Syria, in return, have sent,
Wine, gambling and prostitution.

Iqbal is mistrustful of the champions of Modernism, or, rather, of Westernisation in the East. He fears that their progressivism is merely a pretext for whole-sale surrender to the Western philosophy of life.

The cry of Modernisation in East, I fear,
Is but a pretence for imitation of the West.

Deploring the spiritual and intellectual poverty of the advocates of reform and Westernisation he observes:

Of thy conjuror-cupbearers I have despaired,
Who in the assembly of the East have brought an empty ewer.
What new lightning can there be in these clouds,
When even the old lightning they possess no more?

Blind imitation of other people's cultural and intellectual attitudes, customs and practices is unacceptable to Iqbal. It is a matter of shame, he says, for any community to do so, to speak nothing of the one that has been raised up for the

leadership of the world.

Who in the world of creation is a creative man,
Round him Time does not cease to circumambulate.
Destroy not the worth of your Ego by imitation,
Protect it zealously for this pearl is unique.
Let that community go ahead with the cult of
Modernism,
For which the nightly pleasures are ambition's end.
The cry of Modernisation in the East, I fear,
Is but a pretence for the imitation of the West.

The Islamic countries that have degraded themselves to the position of being the worthless disciples and imitators of the West while, in fact, they were intended to be guides and leaders of mankind have been severely taken to task by Iqbal. Speaking apparently of the Turks he observes more in sorrow than in anger that:

Who could as leaders of their Age function,
The dotards, alas, have become its slaves.

In *Jawed Nama* Iqbal puts the following verses in the mouth of Sa'eed Halim Pasha to describe the shallowness and superficiality of the Turkish Revolution and the intellectual sterility and imitativeness of its main architect, Mustafa Kamal.

Mustafa Kamal, who sang of a great renewal,
Said the old image must be cleansed and polished.
Yet the vitality of the Kaʿaba cannot be made new,
If new *Lat* and *Manat* from the West are imported.
No, the Turks have no new melody in their lute,
What they call new is only the old tune of Europe.
No new breath has entered into their breast,
No design of a new world is in their mind.
Turkey perforce goes along with the existing world,
Melted like wax in the flame of the world we know.

The Western educational system is a slow but unrelenting genocide practised on the people of the East by the rulers of

the West. In the place of the old and condemned method of physical extermination the Western educationists have perfected the technique of casting a whole generation into their mould and, with this end, intellectual factories are being set up, from place to place, under the sanctified names of schools and colleges. The following verses from Akbar Allahabadi throw a flood of light on the detestable plan.

> Pharaoh would not have earned notoriety for infanticide,
> Had the idea of founding a college crossed his mind.

> Rulers of East break the enemy's head,
> Those of the West alter his nature.

Iqbal, with a first hand experience of the Western educational design, gives expression to the same idea with greater seriousness and solidity. He says :

> Be not complacent about the education you receive,
> Through it the soul of a nation they can kill.

Iqbal denounces the Western educational system as a conspiracy against religion and morality.

> Treat its Ego with the acid of education,
> When it softens, give it the shape you please.
> More efficacious than elixir this acid is,
> A mountain of gold it reduces to dust.

Iqbal was one of the very few fortunate young men who not only made the coast safely after diving full length into the ocean of Western education but also brought with them some priceless pearls like the restoration of faith in themselves and in the eternity and comprehensiveness of the message of Islam. Though it is difficult to say that Iqbal remained completely unaffected by Western philosophy and education or that his religious understanding wholly conformed to the teachings of the Book (the holy Quran) and the *Sunnah*, the 'Fire of Namrud' had definitely failed to destory his Islamic Individuality as the

case was with thousands of his contemporaries.

The spell of modern education I broke,
I picked the grain, left the net alone ;
God knows how in the manner of Ibrahim,
I sat in its fire easy in mind.

5

MODERN EDUCATION

Iqbal discovered a number of weaknesses in the modern educational system. He subjected its faults and inadequacies to frank but constructive criticism and also brought them into the notice of experts in educational methods.

When Iqbal speaks of 'schools', 'seminaries' and 'students' he generally means the Western or Westernised educational institutions and their scholars. According to him the present system of education is a curse to the rising generations. It is doing them an irreparable harm. He is displeased both with the *Madrassa* (seminary) and *Khanqah* (Sufi-lodge) where neither the zest for life is witnessed nor the ardour of love, neither knowledge is fostered nor idealism.

> I rose downhearted from *Madrassa* and *Khanqah* where,
> Neither life is promoted nor love nor knowledge nor vision.

He frowns equally upon the bankruptcy of the schools and the soullessness of the monastries.

> The scholars of *Madrassa* ignorant and listless,
> The hermits of *Khanqah* shallow and unambitious.

Iqbal asserts that modern education is an evil because it neglects both the mental and the moral and spiritual development of the younger generations. The result is that a crisis of character has overtaken the youth. Having been brought up in a lopsided manner it is finding it hard to adjust itself to the

environment, to the hard realities of the surrounding world. If the young men everywhere are inclined to be wayward and restless it is due to the emotional imbalance that has got created in them owing to the defective educational design. A deep chasm has been caused between their inner and outer selves, between their mind and body, and knowledge and belief. They have developed a split personality.

The intellect of the present day youth is bright and refulgent but its soul is dark. Its spiritual degeneration has been taking place side by side with mental development. Iqbal knows the younger generation intimately, and, therefore, what he says about it and the judgement he passes is not fanciful but realistic. He laments that the goblet of the youth is empty and its soul is thirsty though outwardly it presents a picture of brightness and vitality. Its mind is luminous but in so far as discernment and perception are concerned it is blind. Hesitation, incertitude and despondency are the characteristic traits of its personality and disappointment its lot. The young men are not young; they are living corpses. They deny their own identity but are ever-willing to repose faith in others. Aliens and strangers are building the church and temple out of the Islamic heaven. The energies of the Muslim youth are being frittered at the doorstep of the tavern. It has grown indolent, slothful and ease-loving. So unbounded is its apathy, torpor and insipidity that the stirrings of ambition are hardly felt in its bosom. The modern educational system has blunted its soul and rendered it virtually lifeless.

Among the Muslim young men the unawareness of the Self and indifference towards their destiny are widespread. Under the influence of the Western Civilisation the Muslim youth is ready to barter away its soul for a few crumbs of bread. The mentors of the rising generations being themselves ignorant of their true worth take little interest in teaching them the secrets of greatness and nobility. They are Muslims yet unaware of

the joy of death and unacquainted with the power of *Tawheed* (the doctrine of Monotheism . They feel no compunction in borrowing idols from the West. These 'sons of Harem' are not averse to making a pilgrimage to the 'street of infamy' and prostrating themselves at the 'feet of the mistress'. The West has killed them without shedding a drop of blood. Their intelect is defiant, their hearts are dead and their eyes are shameless. Even the worst of shocks and disasters do not make an impression on them. Their knowledge and learning, faith and politics, ideas and emotions are all motivated by materialism. No wave of yearning rises in their hearts, their minds are devoid of loftiness and a state of enervation and stagnation has settled on their entire existence.

The idols of modern days carved in the school,
Bear neither the touch of Azar[1] nor possess charm.

———

My complaint against mentors of the school is this:
To eaglets they impart the lesson of earthliness.

———

People of the seminary have strangled thee,
Wherefrom the sound of *La Ilah-a-Illallah*[2] can come?

———

Does the *Madrassa* possess the beauty of thought?
Is the joy of mystery in the *Khanqah* present?

———

From the wine of faith is the warmth of life,
Grant this liquid fire, Oh Lord, to seminary too.

———

Is this the whole fortune of the modern world—
Luminous mind, gloomy heart, arrant eye?

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1. The father of Ibrahim who was a famous idol-maker.
2. Meaning, There is no God save One God.

Ah ! the hot-blooded youth of the school—
Hapless victim of the witchery of West.

—

The young are thirsty, their cup is empty,
Their visages are polished, souls dark, intellects bright.

—

Devoid of vision, bereft of faith, shorn of hope,
Nothing in the world did his eye perceive.

—

The worthless men, untrue to themselves, servile to others,
The architect of the temple, from their clay, has laid the bricks

Nevertheless, Iqbal is not dismayed. He has an unshakable faith in the growing generations and his poems are full of hope and encouragement for the youth.

I am in love with young men who,
Cast their noose on the stars.

—

Grant the youth my morning wail !
To the eaglets give again feathers and wings!
O Lord! I have but one wish—
Give to all and sundry the gift of my foresight!

A glimpse of his hopes and expectations can be seen in *Khitab Ba Jawanan-i-Islam* (An Address to the Young Men of Islam) and some other poems. His message to the scholars of Muslim University, Aligarh, for instance, contains the following verse :

From the passion of *Harem* is the glory of Arabia,
Its place is different, its law unique.

The poem, *Ek Naujawan ke Nam* (To a Young Man), is also richly representative of his ideas and feelings.

Your sofas are from Europe, your fine carpets from Iran ;

My eyes weep blood when I see such pampered ways among young men!
For what are rank and office, what even the pomp of Chosroes, when
You neither like Haider[1] brave the world, nor scorn it like Salman[2]!
Not in the glittering modern world is that contentment to be found:
It is the splendour of the True Believer, his ladder reared on faith.
When the eagle spirit is awakened in the youth,
Its destination appears to it far off in the skies.
Hope on! In despair is the decline of mind and soul,
The True Believer's hopes are among the confidants of God.
Your resting-place is not in the vaulted palace of the kings,
Your are a falcon; build your nest upon the mountain rocks.

Iqbal feels deeply hurt when he sees Muslim young men influenced more by alien ideologies than Islam. In his poem *Falsafa-zada Syed Zade Ke Nam* (To a Philosophy-Stricken Son of Syed) he writes:

Had you not lost your Selfhood,
You would not be a slave to Bergson;
The end of intellect is non-presence,
Philosophy is removal from life.
The soundless notes of thought,
Are death for the love of action.
By faith the way of life is sustained,
Faith is the secret of Mohammad and Ibrahim.

---

1. Hazrat Ali
2. A prince of Iran who, leaving his all, went to Arabia, embraced Islam and became a Companion of the Prophet.

Hold fast to the teachings of Mohammad,
You are the son of Ali, from Bu Ali[1] keep away;
Since the discerning eye you do not possess,
The Leader of the Quraish is better than that of Bokhara.

Iqbal holds the modern educational system responsible for the moral and spiritual decay of the Muslims. He says that the younger generation is devoid of inner warmth and lacking in piety. Its tongue is sharp but there is not a tear of repentance in its eye nor the fear of God in its heart.

The eye that is bright with collyrium of the West,
It's alluring, it's eloquent, but not moist.

He lays the blame squarely at the door of modern educational institutions. Another source of evil is the excessive rationalism which dampens the spirit by advancing the argument of gain and expediency at each step.

Yet another cause of moral and intellectual degeneration is immoderate materialism and exaggerated reliance on worldly means and resources and the deplorable habit of regarding employment and the earning of place and position to be the end of education.

O high-soaring bird, death is preferable to the sustenance,
Which clips the wings and arrests the flight.

The main drawback of the modern education is that it is governed by *Maʿash* (material life) and not *Maʿad* (Futurity). It deprives the nightingale of its song and the nature of its beauty. It does not provide bread but takes away the soul.

It stole the song from nightingale's breast,
And the old fire from the tulip's blood;
Of this school and learning you are proud,
Which placed not bread in the hand but took away life.

1. Avicenna

Mercilessly Iqbal exposes the criminal character of modern education and places his finger on its tender spots with unerring accuracy. Excessive emphasis on means of subsistence, undue expediency, artificial culture and imitative living are its foremost gifts to mankind.

> The modern Age is your Angel of Death,
> Deprived you of soul by giving anxiety for bread ;
> Your schooling has estranged you from high passion,
> That forbade the mind from toiling at evasion;
> Nature endowed you with a falcon's sight,
> Slavery stuffs a wren's eyes in your sockets;
> The school has hidden from them all secrets,
> That are laid bare in the solitudes of hill and desert.

One of Iqbal's grievances against modern education is that it breeds self-indulgence, passivity and inaction and converts the ocean of life into a stagnant pool.

His prayer for the student is :

> God bring you acquainted with some storm,
> The waters of your sea are tideless and still.

The modern educational scheme, again, serves as an instrument of Western Imperialism in the East. It promotes the thoughtless imitation of Western customs, practices and ideals and paves the way for colonialism. It forces the Western mental attitudes upon the people of the Orient and creates new problems in the guise of social and economic advancement. By undermining the age-old Eastern values and traditions it seeks to give rise to a society which, in the words of Macaulay, is Eastern in name and origin but Western in content and reality.

For the reason that the Western education is conceived in atheism, or, at least, in mental unrest and intellectual anarchy, it instils the same ills and evils into the minds of the young and engenders skepticism, discontent and turmoil under the cover of rationalism and free-thinking. In Iqbal's view blindness is better than a distorted vision and ignorance is preferable to

scholarly ungodliness.

Take it from me that the blind
Is better than him whose vision is crooked;
Take it from me, the good-doing simpleton
Is better than the sage who denies God.

Iqbal repeatedly questions the usefulness of scientific achievements that may enable man to conquer space and fly in the air but sweep him off his feet and dislodge him from his spiritual moorings.

Of What use the sky-measuring intellect,
Which revolves round the stars and planets;
And floats aimlessly in the boundlessness of the atmosphere,
Like a speck of cloud on the shoulders of wind ?

The contemporary educational system tends to reduce the worth and value of man before machines, industries and other manifestations of material progress although he is the 'desired pearl of the ocean of creation' and the 'gathered crop of the cornfield of existence'. The world should be subservient to man, not man to the world.

Put down not the lamp of desire from your hand,
Attain the state of yearning and rapture ;
Lose not your Ego on the world's crossroad,
Destory the crossroad and return to yourself.

Draw both the worlds to yourself,
Not that you ran away from your existence;
See your present in the light of the past,
Today from yesterday none can separate.

You bear no resemblance to the man of God,
He, a master of the universe, you a slave ;
Present in you not even the quest of the shore,
He within him possesses the depths of the oceans.

Human understanding remains imperfect without Heavenly favour and Divine revelation. To make it free and unrestrained before the attainment of maturity is to invite capriciousness and perversity. Iqbal has written an illuminating *Qita*[1] under the title of *Azadi-i-Fikr* (Freedom of Thought). It reads :

> Freedom of thought for them is ruinous,
> Who do not posses a disciplined mind;
> If mind is immature, freedom of thought,
> Is the way to make a man a beast.

The manner in which unripe ideologies are becoming widespread in the East and ill-digested ideas are giving rise to mental discontent in the world is also the outcome of the modern craze of giving the dignified name of philosophy to every brainwave.

> People of the seminary entangled in labyrinth of their learning,
> Who, in the Modern Age, cares to keep the count of good and ill ?

In another poem entitled, *Asr-i-Hazir* (Modern Age), Iqbal points out the fundamental drawbacks of both the Orient and the Occident. He says that the unseemly haste and impatience of the technological Age has destroyed the solidity of everything and reduced philosophy to a haphazard collection of incoherent ideas. Love had failed to find its legitimate place in the Western design of living because atheism had left no axis about which it could revolve and intellect had not been able to attain its rightful place in the East because there was no consistency of thought in it.

> Mature ideas, fully developed thought, where is one to seek ?
> The climate of the present times keeps everything unripe.

1. A kind of verse in which the meaning of the first verse of each stanza is completed in the last.

The school gives the rein to the intellect but,
Love leaves the ideas vague, inconsistent, disordered.
Love is dead in the West thanks to atheistic bent of mind,
Intellect in the East is servile owing to inconsistency of thought.

The modern education encourages a blind imitation of the West among the youth till no spirit of originality or independent action is left. The world itself is a slave to convention but the educational institutions are even more narrow and bigoted where men of exceptional ability take pride in being turncoats, opportunists and timeservers instead of functioning as leaders of their Age.

If the culture of the rubies of Badakshan[1] be the aim,
The reflection of the wayward sun is futile.
The world in the web of convention is caught,
Of what worth the school, the endeavour of the scholars ?
Those who could as leaders of their Age function,
The dotards, alas, have become its slaves.

Iqbal maintains that the Muslim youth has no existence of its own ; it is a shadow of the West and even the artificial life it leads is borrowed. The new generation is a structure of flesh and matter hammered into shape by the artisans of the West but into which they have not breathed the soul. It is like a scabbard which though ornamented does not contain the sword. Iqbal bitterly remarks that in the sight of the young the existence of God is a myth but in his view their own existence is shadowy and unreal.

Your being takes all its light from Europe :
You are the four walls her architects have built;

1, Name of a region near the source of Oxus, famous for its rubies.

But mud untenanted is the edifice,
An empty scabbard embellished with flowery gilt.
To your mind God's existence stands not proved;
Your own existence is unproved, to mine.
This only is life—the Self's spark shining out;
Take heed to it ! I do not see yours shine !

The Western educational scheme has crushed the spirit of the Muslim youth and instead of firing it with hope and ambition filled its soul with distress and disgust. It has taught the young men to live ostentatiously, made them soft and effeminate and rendered them incapable of standing up to the challenge of life. Iqbal regards the education to be worthless which robs the crusader of his manly qualities and deprives him of his weapons by supplying the goods of luxury in the battlefield of life.

Iqbal fervently appeals to the benefactors of the rising generations and when he gives expression to the following sentiments through a loving teacher and an affectionate guardian it appears that the agony of the whole world has compressed itself into his heart and the grief of the entire *Millet* has taken possession of his existence.

O old man of Harem ! Give up the habits of monastery,
Understand the significance of my morning wail;
May Allah keep thy young men safe,
Impart to them the lesson of Selfhood, self-denial;
Teach them the ways of piercing the rock,
The West has taught them the art of glass-blowing;
Two hundred years of slavery have broken their hearts,
Think out some remedy for their confusion now;
I speak out thy secrets in the paroxysm of madness,
Make some allowance for my distress too.

6

KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING

Iqbal's views on knowledge and learning were typically his own. They arose out of his own mental and spiritual awareness. About poetry and literature he felt that the aptitude for it and the wholesomeness of taste were God-given gifts and an invincible weapon by which a revolution could be wrought in the lives of men. People could be roused through them to launch a heroic struggle against the depravity of the environment and to revive and establish sound and healthy values and traditions. The pen of a poèt or writer should, therefore, possess the quality of the 'rod' and 'luminous hand' of Moses and of the 'breath' of Jesus. He should be willing and able to perform the duty of the guidance and upliftment of mankind through love and compassion as well as anger and sternness.

A literature produced merely for emotional satisfaction or induced by avarice or any other unworthy sentiment is a waste of time and energy. It serves no useful purpose. It is misconceived as well as misdirected. In a poem he says that he is not indifferent to the appreciation of beauty, he does not deny it, for it is an inborn urge, a natural instinct, but what good can a sickly literature do to the society which is incapable of evoking a positive and enèrgetic response in the people. For what transforms poetry into magic and magic into miracle is the restlessness, warmth and vitality of a living heart. Unless the rich, warm blood of life flows through the lines of a poem it can

neither move the hearts nor inspire the minds. With deep anguish he asks poets, writers and artists of what worth is the thirst for knowledge that does not go beyond the apparent and fails to reach the reality of things. What purpose can the passionate lyrics of the poet or the magical compositions of the musician serve if they do not awaken the hearts and impart life to the atmosphere? The morning breeze blows in vain if it does not carry the message of spring to the garden.

> Valuable is the taste for Art, ye men of vision ;
> But vision that perceives not the Reality is worthless
> The goal of Art is the flame of immortal life,
> Not a spasm or two that vanish like sparks.
> O 'rain of spring' if thy produce no tumult in the ocean's bosom,
> What is the worth of that shell and that pearl ?
> The song of the poet or the minstrel's strain –
> Worthless is the zephyr that makes the garden depressed.
> Without a miracle nations do not rise in the world,
> What is Art devoid of the striking power of the Rod of Moses?

Such is the sublimity of Iqbal's art that when he observes the intellectual poverty and hollowness of his contemporaries he is forced to conclude that like the whole of the East the Muslim World, too, is obsessed with sex. The poets and writers of the World of Islam are constantly engrossed in the thought of woman, the musicians never tire of singing her praises, the sculptors carve her images in clay and stone and the artists see the reflection of her beauty at all places. A new intellectual concept of *Wahdatul Shuhud* (the Unity of Manifestation) has replaced the traditional pantheistic doctrine of *Wahdatul Wujud* (the Unity of Being) in which the world begins and ends with the fair sex. The vulgar sensualism of the intellectuals and

artists has been condemned by Iqbal in these words :

Their fantasy, death-bed of love and passion,
In their dark brains the nations lie entombed ;
In their studios Death's portrait is made,
The art of these high priests sickens of life ;
They hide from mortal eyes the life's high places,
Arouse the flesh, put the spirit to sleep ;
Oh, India's painters, poets, story-writers !
The woman sits astride on their nerves.

On philosophy and other intellectual sciences, also, Iqbal's viewpoint is illustrative of his general approach to life. He believes that an ideology which is not sustained by the spirit of active effort and the sentiment of sacrifice cannot endure. If a system of thought confines itself to abstract reasoning, speculative hair-splitting or metaphysical pattern-weaving and fights shy of entering into the arena of practical life and grappling with social realities it is bound to shrivel up and lose its validity.

Philosophy not written with the blood of heart,
Is either dead or in the throes of death.

Iqbal's wide study and experience of the world had taught him that it was futile to look up to philosophy for the solution of problems fundamental to human existence. Its glossy shell was empty. It did not contain the pearl of life. Philosophy had no guidance to offer to mankind in its struggle for survival and advancement. For a comprehensive programme of life Iqbal falls back upon the message of Islam. He commends his own example to a rationalist friend. "I came from the stock of idolators and my ancestors used to worship the pagan deities," he says. "There is Brahmin blood in my veins. Yet I came out of the fold of infidelity and embraced Islam. You, on the other hand, are of Hashimite descent and related by blood to the 'Leader of the ancients and the moderns'[1]. The high distinction

1. The Prophet.

of being the Prophet's progency belongs to you. But, having renounced him you are groping in the labyrinth of unproved ideas and vain conjectures while I (Indian philosophy may be said to be the marrow of whose bones) hold rationality to be the 'veil of truth' and the opiate which causes the weakening of the moral and physical fibre of man and makes him an escapist. Even Hegel is as empty-handed, speculative and hypothetical as anyone. The flame of the heart burns no more in your life; you have lost your Individuality, and hence, have, become the camp-follower of Bergson. What the world needs is the mesasge of life which philosophy does not possess. The Believer's *Azan*[1] is the call of awakening that rouses the world from sleep and illumines it. Only the legacy of Mohammad and Ibrahim (May the Peace and Blessings of God be upon whom) can bring about order and organisation in faith and life. O Son of Ali, how long will you follow in the steps of Avicenna ! The Leader of the Quraish is far more worthy of allegiance than the leader of Bokhara".

Hold fast to the teachings of Mohammad,
You are the son of Ali, from Bu Ali keep away.

Modern education, in fine, has been a failure. It has not succeeded in raising up a generation which could employ its knowledge to lay the fundation of a healthy society in which man was at peace with himself. It is well-versed in the topography of the North Pole and knows all about the flora and fauna of Africa but pays little heed to the discovery of humanity and the awareness of Self. It has learnt to control and use steam, electricity, atomic energy and nulear power but has no idea of its own strength. It has subjugated the world but taken no steps to discipline itself. It flies in the air and swims in the water but cannot walk properly on the earth.

It all is the fault of contemporary education which has

1 Muslim call to Prayer.

disturbed the moral and emotional equipoise of the youth. The modern man is equipped with Power but lacking in Vision. Iqbal sorrowfully remarks that "the conqueror of the solar rediation could not brighten his own destiny, the seeker of the orbits of the stars could not chalk out a course of action for himself and the master of science could not mark the difference between good and evil."

He who enchained the sunbeams could not
Unfurl the dawn on life's dark night;
He sought the orbits of the stars, yet could not
Travel his own thought's world;
Entangled in the labyrinth of his learning,
Lost count of good and ill.

To draw, finally, the protrait of an ideal Muslim youngman from what Iqbal felt and thought and prayed and preached, he is a man of unblemished character. His youth is clean and spotless; his blow is deadly and he is as strong as a lion in war and as soft as silk in peace. He acquits himself well both in combat and in friendship. He is gentle of speech and stern in action. His desires are few and his aims are high. He is contented in poverty and rich in indigence, self-respecting in want and benevolent in prosperity. He prefers death to a life of dishonour. Sometimes, he is the dew that cools the heart of the tulip, and, sometimes, the storm that causes an upheaval in the bosoms of the oceans. He turns into a raging torrent if the mountains beset his path and passes like a singing brook through the bedchamber of love. He is an embodiment of Abu Bakr's faith, Ali's valour, Abu Zar's contentment and Salman's devotion. His faith is a lamp of guidance in the dark night of the wilderness and his life is an example of manly courage and fortitude, of *Momin's* wisdom and foresight. He likes martyrdom better than worldly power and rule. He casts his noose on the stars and enslaves the forces of nature. The loftiness of his character is the envy of the angels and his existence is a challenge

to falsehood and infidelity. Even the whole world cannot pay his price nor can he be bought by any one except by his Lord. His noble ideals have lifted him above the triviality of the world and its empty allurements. The deceptions of sound and colour mean nothing to him and he refuses to follow and imitate the peacocks and nightingales of the modern civilization, disdainfully proclaiming :

Nightingale is nothing but sound,
And peacock not more than colour.

7

ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Fine arts, in Iqbal's scheme of things, occupy a place of no less importance than the more serious and productive branches of human skill and endeavour. He regards the artists to be the teachers of humanity and the harbingers of Apostolic revolution. Opposed, as Iqbal is, to the employment of aesthetic abilities for petty gain and cheap entertainment he wants them to be brought into play for the growth and development of the Ego.

He believes that painting, music and sclupture instead of getting involved with the external phenomena and immediate object of perception should try to capture the inner richness of man. The true endeavour of art and learning, faith and wisdom ought to be to arouse and evolve the latent potentialities of the human personality. Iqbal rejects the idea of a closed and predetermined universe and the sign of a decadent belief or literature, according to him, is that it gets divorced from reality and shuts its eyes to the hard facts of life.

Music and poetry, statecraft and knowledge, faith and art,
All of them possess a matchless pearl;
If they protect the Ego they're the essence of life,
And if they don't, fiction and wichery.
Nations in the world have come to grief,
When faith and literature with Selfhood have parted.

Iqbal is not intolerant of the fine arts. He does not question their usefulness but gives them their proper place. He sincerely appreciates the creativity of the artists but with the difference that poetry, literature and philosophy take precedence in his judgement, over music, sculpture and architecture because they have their roots in thought and intellect.

Radiance of modern Age is from freshness of thought,
Bricks and stones do not the worlds make.
The courage of those who delve into Ego,
Has from this stream produced oceans without end.
The vicissitudes of time he alone overcomes,
Who with every breath creates life eternal.

Just as Iqbal has his own way of using terms like *'Ilm-o-Ishq* (knowledge and love), *'Aql-o-Dil* (mind and heart), *Faqr-o-Khudi* (contentment and Ego), *Qalandari-o-Shahini* (detachment and falconism) in the same manner his *Junoon* (frenzy) is not devoid of understanding and judgement. He employs it to indicate the ecstasy of love and the earnestness of the heart. It signifies the feeling of fulfilment and exaltation which works wonders and causes supernatural deeds to happen. *Junoon*, in Iqbal's phraseology, denotes the attainment of the state of completest coordination and harmony between the body and spirit for a particular purpose.

I tell you what the life of a Muslim is,
It's the height of adventure, culmination of frenzy.

As in life so also in fine arts Iqbal likes to see the predominance of *Junoon* and utmost sincerity and application on the part of the artist. But for the blossoming of love and frenzy it is not necessary to go into wilderness. They can thrive in society as well.

Who knows *junoon* has other glories too,
Provided it is not confined to forest and hill.
In the overcrowded school it can thrive,
Wilderness, not at all, is essential for it.

In another *Ghazal* he says :

> I have seen such *junoon* also,
> That has stitched the destiny's erents;
> Perfect in the art of drunkenness is he,
> Whose intoxication depends not on wine.

Elaborating on his views on art and literature Iqbal, in the course of an article, remarks that the foremost duty of an artist is the affirmation of Individuality because 'immortality' is achieved only through the expression of the Ego and the affirmation of Existence. The artist should start from his own being in order to reach the heart of the universe. He must not neglect Selfhood in the states of 'unity in diversity', 'privacy in company' and 'collective selflessness' for the material world is always eager to absorb everything like clay. Only such works of art and literature can be said to be eternal in which the onward movement from the matter to the spirit is evident. Iqbal, also, feels that the artist should seek out the possibilities of beauty within himself and not in the external phenomena.

> To seek beauty beyond oneself is erroneous,
> What we are after lies not in front.

In other words, art should not stop at *what it is?* It should go ahead and concern itself with *what it should be?*

> Though not Infidelity, it's not much removed from it either—
> That in the Present and the Apparent, Man of Truth be caught;
> Despair not! Many a revolution is still to come,
> The blue revolving dome is not bereft of new stars.

Iqbal regards the zest for living, earnestness of love and awareness of the Self to be the pre-requisites of the affirmation of Existence.

> O thou! Under the sky whose effulgence is like a spark,
> Who can tell thee what the stages of Existence are ?

Art which is devoid of the substance of Ego,
Alas for the sculpture, poetry and music !
School and seminary nothing but non-Existence teach,
Learn to Exist for thou art and shalt be !

The artist should know himself before he can attain the stage of the realisation and bold affirmation of Selfhood. The development of the Ego cannot materialise before, what Iqbal calls, the blending of *Naaz* (capriciousness) with *Nayaz* (humbleness) and the 'turning away of the drop from the ocean'. The limit of Iqbal's sensitiveness is that he describes the *Sajda*[1] in Namaz to be symbolic of Selflessness and *Qayam*[2] of Selfhood and wishes to preserve the individuality of submission even in the absorption of prayer.

Thy half-opened eyes are still faulty of vision,
Thy Existence, even now, a mystery to thee ;
Thy humbleness is still unadorned with coquetry,
For thy *Namaz* even now, is devoid of *Qayam*;
The strings of thy Ego's harp are still broken,
For thou art, even now, ignorant of Rumi's song.

The poet frowns upon the art which leads one away from life and destroys Selfhood and in which the material world is the ultimate end and purpose and man is treated as a plaything. He dislikes the modern theatre and opera for the reason that they are soulless and artificial. In them man becomes the *Tamasha* (show, spectacle) and the world the *Tamashaee* (spectator).

The shrine of thy existence is incandescent with Selfhood,
What is life but Ego's joy, heat and permanency?
Higher than the moon and Placdias its place,
From its light thy being and attributes.

1. Kneeling and touching the forehead to the ground.
2. The posture of standing erect.

The receptacle thine, the Ego of another, God forbid !
Revive not the trade of *Lat*[1] and *Manat*[2].
The triumph of drama that thou ceaseth to be,
If thou art gone Ego's warmth remains nor life's music.

Likewise, Iqbal wants painting to convey the message of the development of human personality. The spiritual content of the Oriental art attracts while the modern abstract art of the West repels him. He relishes the portrayal of nobler thoughts and sentiments. His partiality for the beautitude, warmth and spirituality of the Eastern art is very clear.

What grieves me is that modern sculptors,
Have lost the eternal ecstasy of the East.
You have perceived Nature and unveiled it too,
Show your Selfhood in its mirror then.

Music he wants to pulsate with life. It should be expressive of the tumult and excitement, fire and flame of the heart. Iqbal likes the blood of the musician to flow into the chords of his instrument. He should not only be a master of pitch and rhythm but also possess a feeling heart and a sensitive soul.

Wherefrom did the quality of wine come in the wail of flute?
From the heart of the flautist? Or, from reed?
What heart is ? From where is its strength derived?
How does its throb overturns the throne of Chosroes?
Why in its life is the life of nations?
Why from moment to moment its state alters?
The empires of Syria, Rome and Rai[3]—why are they,
Not worth a dime in the sight of a man of heart?
The day the minstrel understands the mysteries of heart,
Know that all the stages of art are reached.

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1. & 2. Names of idols worshipped by Pagan Arabs.
3 Name of the capital of Persian Iraq (Parthia).

What Iqbal seeks is the eternal melody, the timeless song and the fire-breathing musician whose tune may not be like a flash of the 'lightning of destruction' but 'a miraele of survival and permanence.'

The wonderhouse of moon and stars may vanish,
You should remain, and your ethereal song.
The doctors of Selfhood regard which as lawful,
The melody is still in quest of a minstrel.

If the message of death be in music concealed,
Forbidden in my eyes are rebeck, harp and flute.

With his breath he poisons the tune,
The musician whose heart is impure.

Iqbal condemns the music and sculpture which enthrall the spirit of man as the 'fine arts of the slaves'. He believes that song and music do not instil life but deal out death by sapping the energies and producing the tendency to avoid the undesirable realities by indulging in pleasant fantasies. Because of them the tenderness of the heart degenerates into a feeling of melancholy and life-weariness. They do not even bestow the pain which obliterates all suffering. The healing touch is missing in them because they are immersed in pessimism and despair.

Music should be like a rising tide, sweeping away all the traces of sorrow and depression. It should be nourished by the sweet madness of love and steeped in the blood of the heart. The glory of music is that it transcends sound and modulation and enters into the realm of the infinite.

D'you know in music there comes a stage,
When speech flourishes without the aid of words?

Music without a message is meaningless, and message, in the words of Maulana Rum, is what exercises an ennobling influence on the listeners and protects them against enslavement to external form and structure.

Meaning is what, by itself, seizes you,
Makes you indifferent to form and contour.
Meaning is not what makes a man purblind,
And heightens the effect of pattern and style.

About modern sculpture Iqbal feels that it is distinguished neither by the spirit of Ibrahim nor by the art of Azar but is simply crazy. What goes on in its name is the carving and chiselling of death. Unanimated by faith the sculptor weilds his chisel and ha n ner without a sense of purpose. There is no spirit of seeking in him, nor the will to create. He is simply a wage-earner and a slave to popular preference. He has no feeling or judgement of his own. The sculptor seeks beauty in the external manifestations of nature while it is, essentially, an inner experience.

The artist who views man and the universe from the same angle and regards them both to be no more than the products of water and clay fails to do justice to himself. His works are always wanting in originality, both of conception and design.

The moment man supposed himself to be of the earth,
The light of Divinity within him died.
As Moses out of Selfhood stepped,
His hand was darkened and staff became a rope.
Life without the miraculous is not anything,
But this secret to everyone is not known.

The artist should not only unveil nature but also make an improvement on it through the supernatural element within him and lay the foundations of a new existence. He should try to fill the void in life by putting his own soul into it.

To remove every inadequacy is your glory,
With the fullness of your soul.
Criterion of good and evil is your conscience,
Your art the mirror of vice and virtue.

Before the artist embarks upon the conquest of the world he should overmaster himself and develop his Ego. When the

individual, thus, fulfils himself he rises above the cosmos and becomes a vital part of the grand design of creation.

Set down the foot not slowly in the woodlands of desire,
Seize the world that within you lies.
Weak and vanquished? Overcome yourself and be triumphant,
If you are in search of God seek yourself out.
Skilled in case you are in self-conquest,
Conquest of the world will be easy for you.

As against music and sculpture Iqbal has a greater liking for architecture. But here, too, he is more impressed by structures which convey a definite message and whose foundations are laid in love. He sees the Palace of Al-Hamara in Spain but it makes little impression on him while he is bewitched by the Mosque of Cordova. "The Al-Hamara", says he, "did not impress me much but the visit to the Mosque of Cordova made an impact on my feelings the like of which I had not experienced before".

Similarly, the Paris Mosque holds no fascination for the poet for the simple reason that it does not go beyond being a piece of architectural elegance.

What should my eyes see of architect's skill?
This shrine of the West knows nothing of God ;
Is it a mosque ? Nay, the spell-weavers of the West,
Have smuggled an idol-hall's soul in its carcass.
And who built this palace of idols?
The same robbers whose hands have turned Damascus into a desert.

The ruins of *Masjid-i-Quwatul Islam,* built by Qutbuddin Aibak, produce a lasting effect on his mind since they tell of the deep sincerity and resoluteness of the days when Islam had made its advent into India and pitched its tent in this strange land.

What in my unillumined breast is left?
La Ilah is dead, frustration rife, enthusiasm gone.

Even Nature's eye will recognise me not,
The place of Mahmud is different from that of Ayaz[1].
Why should of thy massiveness the Muslim not be ashamed?
Years of servitude, have they not turned him into a rock?
Worthy of thee is the Namàz of the true Believer,
In whose *Takbir*[2] battle between Existence and Non-existence is fought.
Gone from me is the warmth of feeling,
Without effulgence is my prayer and invocation.
My *Azan* is bereft of grandeur and sublimity,
Is the *Sajda* of such a Muslim acceptable to thee?

Iqbal extols the buildings constructed by Qutbuddin Aibak, Sher Shah and Shahjahan as 'the architecture of the free-born' and says that anyone who possesses a living heart will realise, on seeing these magnificent monuments, how their builders have given expression to their Individuality. They have compressed an age into a moment. From their massiveness the viewer acquires firmness of character. Highmindedness, manly courage and determination are writ large over their bricks and stones, "Whose places of genuflexion these stones are?" Iqbal asks in wonderment and, then, he cries out, "Don't ask me! Men of the heart alone can tell what passes in the soul. I know only this much that a forehead not adorned with the lance of *Illallah*[2] is not worthy of prostration in this shrine."

In me not the lance of *Illallah*,
Un-worthy of this shrine am I.

In the same way, Iqbal pays a glowing tribute to the Taj Mahal. "Looking at the Taj on a moonlit night", he says, "it appears that its marble slabs are flowing like water and a

1. Ayaz was the favourite slave and intimate of Mahmud of Ghazni.
2. The allusion is to the Muslim confession of faith meaning "There is no god except One God."

moment spent here is more lasting than eternity. Here love has revealed its secret through the stones and pierced them with the points of eyelashes. Heavenly music is bursting forth from them and love has attained immortality by passing beyond the range of time and space. It is love which gives wings to man and endows his emotions with loftiness and effulgence. It sharpens the intellect and transforms the stone into a mirror. By love the hearts of men of feeling become seats of Divine splendour like the Valley of Sinai and the artists acquire the luminous hand (of Moses)".

Another characteristic of Iqbal's conception of art is that he regards *Jamal* (beauty) not to be different from *Jalal* (might) but only an aspect of it. Beauty without power is unthinkable to him.

> Belovedness without subdual is wizardry,
> Belovedness with subdual, Apostleship.
>
> ——
>
> The beginning of love and ecstasy is subdual,
> The end of love and ecstasy is belovedness.
>
> ——
>
> Which shines from the forehead of man of God,
> The essence of creation is pervaded by the same majesty.
>
> ——
>
> The poem whose message is eternal life,
> Is Gabriel's song, or Raphael's trumpet-note.
>
> ——
>
> In the same eye is power and subdual,
> In the same is beauty and loverhood.

Iqbal has explained his viewpoint at length in the poem called *Jalal-o-Jamal* (Power and Beauty).

> For me the strength of Haider[1] is enough,
> The sharpness of Plato's intellect is your fortune.

1. Title of Ali.

With me the meaning of beauty and elegance is,
That before power the sky is bowing low.
Without power beauty is not worth a straw,
Melody without fire is mere breath.
As punishment even the fire is not acceptable to me,
Whose flame is not unruly, wilful, headstrong.

If the artist is to fulfil his mission he should be sensitive enough to form a clear mental picture of intoxication by looking at the wine. This power of discernment and penetration is the hall-mark of a true artist. The artist must be capable of beholding beauty without a veil. His art should be vitalising and uplifting. He should look at the bright side of things for only then can he provide guidance to mankind. Art is not only the mirror of life but also its test and standard of judgement. The artist not only observes but also evaluates. The true function of artistic effort is not to give delight but to create a new world and make an improvement on nature.

The world does not conceal its nature,
Each atom on self-revelation is bent.
The business of life seems entirely different,
If the eye be blessed with the vision of love.
With it the sons of enslaved nation,
Have risen in the world to rule and govern.
With this eye my frenzy is teaching,
To every dust-particle ways of desert-trotting.
If you do not possess the vision of love,
Your existence is a disgrace to heart and eye.

Speaking of the individuality of the artist Iqbal remarks:

His outlook is different from his Age,
Of his state saints and sages unaware.

The artist is his own world. Before he proceeds with the reconstruction of the external world a new world begins to take birth within him and he gives shape to the images and ideas that pass through his mind in the state of inspiration.

The quintessence of Destiny is not hidden from a living heart,
It sees the image of the new world in dream ;
And when the *Azan* awakens him from sleep,
He builds the world as he had seen in dream ;
The body of the new world the grime of his palm,
And Its soul his mighty *Takbir*[1].

Deliver Art from the serfdom of Nature,
Hunters the artists are, not prey.

If you can see the world with your own eyes,
The skies are illumined with the light of your dawn.

We have seen already how Iqbal emphasises the need of sincerity, perseverance and dedication in the artist. Mere natural aptitude is not enough. Art is a jealous mistress and it demands single-minded application. Iqbal does not believe in the lackadaisical approach of being 'tutored by God.'

Blood of the heart is the merchandise of life,
Life, Oh fool, is *Lahu-tarang* not *Jal-tarang*.[2]

The vicissitudes of time he alone overcomes,
Who with every breath creates life eternal.

The goal of Art is the flame of immortal life,
Not a spasm or two that vanish like sparks.

Only by the toil of flight is the truth revealed,
That earth from the heavens is not far apart.

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1. The call of *Allah-o-Akbar*.
2. *Jal-tarang* is the music produced by filling a brass vessel with water and beating the edges with two sticks. What Iqbal means is that the music of life is produced by filling its vessel with *Lahu* (blood), not water.

No such world exists underneath the sky,
Where the throne of Kai[1] is seized without a struggle.

Each moment a new Tur[2] and a new epiphany,
May the episode of love never come to an end.

Oh Iqbal ! these are the days of rock-hewing,
Beware of what through the mirror is shown !

Much as creativeness is God-given,
Men of skill are not free from effort.

From the warmth of mason's blood is construction,
Be it the tavern of Hafiz or Behzad's idol-hall.

Without patient effort merit is not revealed,
The home of Farhad[3] is lit up with sparks of his axe.

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1. The kings of Persia of the Kayanian dynasty.
2. Mount Sinai on which Moses witnessed the effects of Divine epiphany.
3. The name of a famous Persian statuary, who, to please his mistress Shirin hewed his way through a mountain and caused a stream of milk to flow along a canal.

8

THE PERFECT MAN

In the world of hue and scent, which, with all its allurements, seems to Iqbal to be a den of wild beasts, his searching eye looks for the Perfect Man. He begins his quest in the long Persian poem, the *Asrar-i-Khudi,* with these verses from Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi.

> Last night the Sheikh wandered about the town with a lamp
> Saying, "I am tired of demon and beast; man is my desire.
> My heart is sick of the feeble-spirited fellow-travellers;
> The lion of God[1] and Rustam-i-Dastan[2] are my desire".
> I said, "We too searched for him but he could'nt be found".
> He replied, "What cannot be found—that thing is my desire".

On a dark night, Maulana Rum tells, a man of great wisdom was wandering in the streets of the town, with a lamp in his hand, as if he was searching for something that had been lost. The poet enquired from him what he was trying to find and he replied that he had grown sick of living in what, in truth, was the abode of wild animals and was now looking

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1. The title of Hazrat Ali.
2. Rustam son of Zal (nicknamed Dastan) was a famous hero of pre-Islamic Persia.

round for man, a young, deep-hearted individual, who could revive his sagging spirits and restore his faith in humanity. The poet remarked, "You are sadly mistaken. What you are looking for does not exist. You are wasting your time. I, too, left no stone unturned in seeking him out but to no avail. Not a trace of him could be found." "It is the rare, the uncommon, the unattainable that I seek", replied the sage.

Now, did Iqbal succeed in his quest? Was he able to find the man of his dreams, the Perfect Man, who had realised his transcendental Self? From Iqbal's poems it is clear that he was eminently successful. He not only found the "lost" man but also spent long years of his life in his company. Iqbal's discovery was even more important than the discovery of the New World by Columbus. It was a glorious achievement and a manifest victory for the world particularly in the present times when man had ceased to exist and humanity had become a farce.

Iqbal's Perfect Man is not different from a true and sincere Muslim who does not treat his religion as a wooden dogma but makes his life conform to the genuine pattern of the Quran and attains the highest degree of perfection by living upto it honestly and in every way. He is distinguished from fellow-men by the undying quality of his faith. It is the unconquerable spirit of belief which draws the line between him and the rest of mankind. He outshines them in courage and spiritual stamina. The pure and unsullied Monotheism of the True Believer separates him from the worshippers of men and glory. His disinterested humanitarianism and the universality of his outlook overrun the barriers of race and geography. He possesses the programme of an ideal life and abides by it scrupulously. However much the values may change and the structure of human society is altered he remains steadfast. In the words of the Quran he is like *"A goodly tree, its roots set firm, its branches reaching into heaven"*(—XIV : 24).

Says Iqbal :

> The point of God's great compass the Believer's firm faith,
>
> All this universe else—shadow, illusion, deceit.

The above description of the Perfect Man brings to our mind the two qualifications of a Muslim, one relating to the physical and the other to spiritual existence. In his physical existence a Muslim is like any other mortal. He is born as all men are, grows up as they do and feels hunger and thirst like them. Like them, too, he is sensitive to heat and cold and falls ill and gets well. In prosperity and poverty, again, he is not different from the rest of mankind. He engages in trade and occupation, loves his family and carries a heart in his bosom. In brief, in the human state of being the Muslim is governed by the same law of nature as the others are. The vicissitudes of time make no concession to him simply because he bears a particular name, belongs to a particular race or wears a particular dress.

But in the spiritual sphere of his existence the Muslim is endowed with a message which is the legacy of the Prophets. He has his own outlook on life and bears faith in certain truths that are everlasting. He lives for a definite aim. Looked at from this angle, the Muslim becomes a part of the mystery of existence. He is indispensable. Without him life will be incomplete. The Perfect Man or Ideal Muslim, as such. has the right to live and prosper in the world. It is essential for the preservation of the human society that he lived and thrived. The world needs the true Muslim in the same way as it needs air, water and sunshine. If life is dependent on the basic elements of earth, air, fire and water it also cannot do without an ideal faith and a perfect morality deriving their light from the teachings of the Prophets. The Muslim is discharging this responsibility with all his strength. He is carrying it ahead as best as he can. In the absence of the faithful Believer this message

and these lofty ideals will be lost or become an enigma for the world. The man of faith is to creation what the sun and the moon are to it. Generations and communities will rise and pass away, cities will turn into ruins and the ruins will change again into cities, governments will be made and unmade but the Ideal Muslim will remain forever.

Iqbal's Perfect Man, or Superman, to use a more modern term, is immortal because he is endowed with an everlasting message. An eternal truth is embedded in his heart and his life is spent in the pursuit of an imperishable ideal.

The Muslim shall not perish for by his *Azan*,
The secret of Moses and Abraham is revealed.

It does not, of course, mean that every individual belonging to the Muslim community will live permanently. The Muslim *Millet* is like an ocean in which waves are continually rising and subsiding but its reality remains unchanged.

Iqbal, further, claims that the Muslim is the object of creation. The world has been created for him and he has been created for God. Whatever the verdict of theological doctors regarding the veracity of the celestial Tradition that *but for your sake (O Prophet Mohammad) We would not have made the heavens and the earth*, Iqbal's penetrating eye perceives something which is distinctly unusual. He is clear-sighted enough to go right into the spirit of the Quran. Before him is the Muslim and his lofty mission. He also possesses a keen understanding of history and is well-acquainted with the values of the world and the properties of things. He is positive in his mind that the heavens and the earth and all that is contained in them have been created for the True Believer who is the Vicegerent of God and the rightful inheritor of the treasures of the world.

The earth is the stout-hearted Believer's heritage,
Who is not *Saheb-i-Laulak*[1], no Believer is he!

1. *Laulak* literally means "Had you not been there." Here the reference is to the Tradition quoted above.

In order to bring to fruition the gospel of thought and action the Believer is required to lead a life of constant endeavour. Iqbal is emphatic that a Muslim can never be a time-server. He has been raised up to change the course of history, to make the world follow his path and to set a new direction for the evolution of human civilisation. He possesses a new message for the ailing humanity which is the panacea for all its ilis. He is responsible for the guidance of mankind and no one is more worthy of the leadership of the world than him. If the times do not suit him or the society is bent upon going the way of folly and ignorance it does not befit him to yield to the power of the age or society. He ought to raise the banner of revolt and fight against the prevalent evils till he got his own way. In Iqbal's view the doctrine, "Move in the direction in which the wind is blowing", is not worthy of the Believer.

The gospel of the faint-hearted: Adapt yourself to the times,
But you, if the times do not agree, contend with them.

The true Believer does not make a compromise with the perverted values of life. He fights against them. He has been entrusted with the duty of the correction and reform of mankind and it would be justified even if he had to take recourse to destruction in the persuit of his mission for it would be for the sake of building the world anew.

In whose heart abides the urge to die for Truth,
He should first instil life into his earthly frame ;
Burn down the borrowed heavens and earth,
And from their ashes create a world of his own.

It is not fitting for him to submit to the frowns of fortune and seek shelter behind the facades of fatalism and predestination. Only those who are lacking in faith and wanting in courage put forward such excuses. The truthful Believer is the Destiny of Allah.

If a Muslim is without faith, he is a slave to destiny,
Endowed with faith, he becomes the destiny of Allah.

Exalt thy Ego so high that before every decree,
God Himself may ask thee: What is thy wish?

As Iqbal examines the history of the world he concludes that a healthy and wholesome revolution is always brought about by the faithful Believer whose likeness is as that of the morning of blessedness on the horizon of mankind. He is the leader of revolution and the messenger of life, the *Muezzin*[1] of daybreak after a long and dismal night. His *Azan* breaks the stillness of the world which is as oppressive as the silence of the graveyard and reanimates it. It is the same call that rose from the heights of Faran[2] thirteen hundred years ago and proved to be the note of Raphael's trumpet for the ailing humanity. Even today it is capable of rousing the world and stirring the conscience of man. What is needed is only the Believer who can infuse into it the spirit of Bilal[3].

Which can change the dark night into sunny forenoon,
The Believer's *Azan* is the voice of the firmament.

The *Azan* of the Believer alone can usher in the morning that will give rise to a new world.

The morning which is sometimes today and sometimes tomorrow,
God alone knows from where it comes.
The morning by which the bedchamber of existence shakes,
From the *Azan* of the faithful Believer is born.

Iqbal also believes that the strength of the true Believer is

1. Public crier to prayer among Muslims.
2. The name of a hill in Mecca.
3. A Companion of the sacred Prophet who used to give the *Azan* in his mosque.

supernatural. It is not explicable by the known laws of nature. His existence is nothing short of a miracle for the common people. He draws a fresh vigour and vitality from his faith and God's Will, Intention and Might are on his side. Mountains cannot block his path, nor oceans offer a hindrance.

The hand of the *Momin* is the Hand of Allah—
Dominant, resourceful, creative, ensuring success;
Fashioned of dust and light, slave with the Master's attributes,
His heart is indifferent to the riches of the worlds.

Heroes of Islam like Tariq bin Ziad, the Conqueror of Spain, are the living images of Iqbal's Ideal Muslim.

The *Ghazis*[1] these mysterious bondsmen of Thine,
To whom Thou hast granted zest for Divinity.
Deserts and oceans fold up at their kick,
And mountains shrink into mustard-seeds.
Indifferent to the riches of the worlds it makes,
What a curious thing is the ecstasy of love?
Martyrdom is the desired end of the *Momin*,
Not spoils of war, kingdom and rule.

—

Thou made the desert-dwellers absolutely unique,
In thought, in perception, in the morning *Azan*.
What, for centuries, life had been seeking,
It found the warmth in the hearts of these men.

Iqbal looks deep into the hidden sources of the *Momin's* strength. He exclaims:

Who can imagine the strength of his arm?
Destinies change at the glance of the *Momin*.

The truth of Iqbal's observation is borne out by the record of the past events. Many a time small bands of truthful

1. Heroes of Islam

Muslims have swept across the stage of history, trodding under the hooves of their horses the obstacles that came in their way. The deeds of Muslim heroes like Sa'ad bin Abi Waqas, Mussana Ibn-i-Harisa, Aqaba Ibn-i-Amir, Mohammad bin Qasim, Moosa Ibn-i-Naseer and Tariq bin Ziad are still preserved in the annals of our race.

The *Momin* is a world-reality, above and beyond the limitations of time and space. He cannot be imprisoned by the boundaries of race, politics or geography

Limitless is his world, boundless his long horizon,
Tigris and Danube and Nile but a wave in his sea;
His times are wondrous, his legends are strange,
To the ages outworn he gave the command to depart;
Saqi of men of taste, horseman of the realm of desire,
Pure and unmixed his wine, tempered and glittering his steel.

Iqbal's Superman is timeless. He belongs to no particular place or country. The whole world is his home.

God-intoxicated *Faqir* belongs to East not to West,
Delhi nor Isfahan nor Samarqand his home.

Boundless is the world of the *Momin*
In all places his home.

Since the world belongs to God and the Muslim is God's own bondsman the entire universe is his home.

It is related that when Tariq landed at the coast of Spain he ordered the boats in which he and his men had come to be burnt so that there remained no possibility of a retreat. Some of his companions expressed their disapproval of it. "What are you doing?" they protested. "We are far away from home and have to return, after all." The dauntless General, thereupon, smiled, drew his sword and remarked, "What is the question of returning? Every country is our country for it is the country of our Lord and to Him do we belong". Iqbal has depicted this

memorable event in these words:

> As Tariq burnt the boats at Andalusia's coast,
> His companions protested: "Your act is unwise,
> We are away from home; how shall we return?
> Repudiation of material means the *Shariat*[1] does not permit."
> Tariq smiled, drew his sword, declared:
> "Every country is our country for it's the country of our Lord."

The Ideal Muslim of Iqbal's concept is an assemblage of diverse, often contradictory, attributes In it lies the secret of the manysidedness of his personality. These different and mutually incompatible qualities are the manifestations of the Divine Attributes that are revealed through the agency of the true Muslim. For instance, in magnanimity, mildness and forbearance the *Momin* is the embodiment of the Divine Attribute of Forgiveness, in sternness, in respect of faith, and in severity and anger with regard to flasehood and infidelity he signifies the Divine Attribute of Subdual and in piety and virtuousness he stands for the Divine Attribute of Purity. A Muslim cannot be a true representative of his faith unless he acquires all these qualities.

> Subdual and Forgiveness, Purity and Power,
> When these combine a Muslim is born.

The *Momin* of this mental and moral greatness is like the shining sun which never sets; if it goes down in one direction it rises in another.

> Men of faith live in the world like the sun,
> Setting here, rising there; rising here, setting there.

When a calamity has struck some part of the Islamic World, due, no doubt, to our own folly, suitable amends have invariably been made for it elsewhere. If Islam has suffered a

1. The holy Law.

setback at one place it has gained a notable victory at another. A new star has never failed to appear on the firmanent of Islam whenever darkness has threatened to spread over it. The loss of Spain was an appalling tragedy for the Muslim *Millet* but at that very time the Ottoman Empire emerged in the heart of Europe. The sack of Baghdad by the Tartars was a gruesome event but the Muslim Empire in India rose to its zenith simultaneously with it. At the beginning of the 20th Century the World of Islam suffered numerous reverses at the hands of Europe and it seemed that Turkey was going to be divided by the Allied Powers among themselves, like their ancestral property, but in the midst of the encircling gloom the Muslims exhibited a remarkable capacity for resurgence. They, suddenly, became politically active and various movements were initiated in their lands for revival and reform. Today the Muslim World seems to be poised for rebirth and regeneration. Let us see what emerges from the other side of the screen. The annals of Islam are replete with events illustrating the truth of the statement that if its sun has sunk below the horizon on one side its refulgent rays have shot forth from the other. It is so because Islam is the last message of God which is the guidance for all mankind and no other message is going to be sent down after it. The Muslims are the last community to serve as the custodians and preachers of the Divine Word and if they are destroyed the ultimate guidance from on High, too, will perish and humanity will be left to grope and fumble in utter darkness till the Last Day.

The existence of Islam has, thus, at all times posed the gravest threat to impiety and ungodliness. It is the only programme of life whose preservation spells death for all the fake and hollow ways of living. Godless conduct and the ascendency of the Devil can continue only till Islam comes into its own and a body of true believers sets about fulfilling its mission. Iqbal has developed this theme in his excellent poem entitled, *Iblis ki Majlis-i-Shura* (The Advisory Council of Satan), in which

Islam is depicted as the chief source of danger to the infernal order of things. The Devil feels that the more the Islamic law and programme of life is hidden from the world's view the better it is for him and all that he upholds. He is thankful that the Muslim himself is neglectful of his faith and advises his disciples to keep him engrossed in scholastic disputations so that all his "moves on the chessboard of life" are frustrated and he remains a stranger to the "world of action".

> Every moment do I at the thought of their awakening tremble,
> The real purpose of whose faith is the superintendence of the world.

Without doubt the devoted henchmen of Satan have amply succeeded in their evil designs against Islam. Their chief concern has been to extinguish the embers of faith that lie hidden in the breasts of Muslims, to overwhelm them and to deprive them of Islamic courage and vitality in the Arab as well as non-Arab lands since it is the Islamic fervour which arouses the Muslims to superhuman feats of fearlessness and sacrifice in the path of God and keeps them firm and steadfast in the face of heaviest odds. In *Iblis Ka Paigham Apne Siyasi Farzandon ke Nam* (Satan's Command to his Political Offspring) Iqbal says:

> The man who raked with hunger fears not death—
> Mohammad's spirit from his breast expel:
> Put Frankish thoughts into Arabia's mind—
> Islam from Yemen and Hejaz expel:
> Cure for the Afghan's pride of faith ?
> The *Mulla*[1] from his mountain and glen expel.

The surest way to it is the setting up of an educational system that puts an end to reverence for Islam and attachment to its way of life in the hearts and minds of the growing generations of the Muslims and engenders a materialistic outlook

1. Meaning the religious teacher.

which demoralises them and lays them open to doubts and misgivings and turns them into shameless seekers of physical pleasures. Akbar Allahabadi has subjected the same educational scheme to devastating sarcasm in the following verse:

> Pharaoh would not have earned notoriety for infanticide,
> Had the idea of setting up a College crossed his mind.

It is evident to Iqbal that the forces of darkness and paganism are attaining their desired objective, the weakening of spiritual fibre is taking place everywhere, the flame of faith is dying out, the spirit of *Jehad*[1] is languishing and greed and materialism are gaining the upper hand.

> In the ardour of Arab's remembrance, in the music of Iranian's thought,
> Obvervations are not of Arabia nor ideas those of Iran.
> Not one Husain in the caravan of Hejaz is found,
> Tresses of Tigris and Euphrates though are lustrous still.

The pathetic state of Muslims moves Iqbal to tears; his verses get saturated with the blood of his heart against the inheritors of the creed of Monotheism and he sorrowfully complains:

> O inheritor of *La Ilah!* In you is left,
> The speech of loverhood nor sternness of character;
> Hearts in breasts trembled at your glance,
> But in you the fervour of *Qalandar* burns no more.

Another place he laments:

> Prostration at which the earth's soul trembled,
> Pulpit and arch for it are yearning;
> In Egypt and in Palastine I did not hear,
> The *Azan* that gave the mountain the creeps.

1. Means earnest and ceaseless striving in a noble cause, involving sacrifice, if need be, of life, person and property.

Pearl of life in thy ocean does not exist,
I looked for it in every wave and shell.

The root cause of all the maladies and miseries that beset the Muslims is that the spark of faith has gone out of their hearts and they have grown dead to spiritual feeling.

The madness of love is no more,
The blood runs in Muslims veins no more;
Their prayer-ranks broken, hearts distracted, worship spiritless,
Because their inner passion is no more.

All the same, Iqbal is not disheartened. He is not a poet of despondency and pessmism but of faith and hope. He is confident that political shocks, trials and ordeals will rouse the Muslims from lethargy and lassitude and produce a new impulse of life in them. In *Tulu-i-Islam* (Dawn of Islam) for example he says:

The faint light of stars tells the daybreak is near,
The sun has risen, gone the period of heavy slumber.
In the East's chill veins life-blood flows again,
Avicenna and Farabi this mystery cannot solve.
The tempest of West has made the Muslim a true Muslim,
In the tumult of sea pearl's fulfilment lies.
To *Momin*, again, from the Almighty is going to be granted,
The dignity of Turk, the intellect of Indian, the eloquence of Arab.

And again

Of his desolate sowing-field Iqbal shall not despair,
A little rain and the soil is most fertile, Oh Saqi !

The Western Civilisation is on its last legs. It has had its day and now the end of the road for it is near. Signs of decay and disintegration are already noticeable in it. Like a ripened fruit it is ready to fall to the ground. It has entered the last

stages of its life and a new civilisation is about to take its place. The 'old world is crumbling and a 'new' world is being born. But Iqbal is equally convinced that unless truthful Muslims assume the leadership of the emerging world mankind will continue to be treated heartlessly by the crafty gamblers of the West.

> But now a new world is born, the old world is dying—
> The world the dice-throwers of Europe have made a gambling-den.

9

THE PLACE OF THE TRUE BELIEVER

During the days of Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi frustration and despair was rife among the people due to continuous mis-rule, uninterrupted oppression and endless strife. Man stood diagraced in his own eyes. Iranian mysticism had preached the cult of renunciation so sedulously that the awareness of the Self which is the wellspring of human activity, eagerness and enthusiasm, had come to be looked down upon as immoral and retrogressive. The attainment of the celestial standards of purity and perfection and denial and rejection of the basic human propensities were extolled as the only objectives worth living for and celibacy was advocated as a mark of spiritual excellence. Man saw the fulfilment of his destiny not in humanity but in the repudiation of it. A general disavowal of the concept of human dignity and of the ideals and aspirations characteristic to mankind had taken place. The philosophy of life-contempt had also permeated poetry and literature. Owing to abnoxious moral and mental attitudes and lack of appreciation of his own protentialities man, sometimes, felt inclined to be envious even of the quadrupeds.

Maulana Rum saw, at once, what lay at the root of the malady and attacked it unsparingly. He raised the cry of human superiority and worthiness with such vigour and fervour that the dormant capabilities of man were awoken and he became conscious of his pivotal place in the universe. The

whole range of Islamic thought and literature was influenced by the Maulana's teachings and a new trend was set in poetry and mysticism.

It was followed by the era of the political and cultural ascendency of the West which had imbibed monasticism from the Roman Church and also received its share of the doctrines of the Original Sin and Atonement. Apart from it, in the Western society, thanks to the materialistic system of thought, man was regarded to be a tool of production and an evolved animal whose main purpose in life was to manufacture goods of trade and satisfy his physical appetites.

As a natural corollary to it the intrinsic goodness and nobility of man and all the things appertaining to his inner existence were neglected and he was condemned to the position of a helpless creature before a blind and heartless Providence.

The Muslim East was plunged in despondency and confusion. Overawed by the material achievements of the West the Muslim surrendered meekly before it and sought refuge in the philosophy of ascetic inaction. In the bargain, they were not only pushed behind and left to gaze with sentimental melancholy at the tremendous turn of events but also lost faith in themselves and having drawn back from the life of active effort began to derive a morbid satisfaction from their misfortune.

The Muslim became the proverbial sick-man of the Orient and an exaggerated awareness of his troubles made him worthless in his own eyes. It was in these circumstances that a new political and economic system and unfamiliar intellectual and literary patterns appeared in Asia and Africa which were remarkable for the same negation of faith and denial of Individuality that were the distinctive features of the Western Civilisation. In all these systems and viewpoints the emphasis was on the repudiation of transcendental truths. A deliberate attempt was made to overlook the innate powers and hidden

capabilities of the True Believer by means of which he overcame the forces of nature and performed extraordinary deeds. No one had the vision and perspicacity to recognise the worth of the *Momin*'s fearlessness, magnanimity and earnestness, his contemptuous disregard of artificial values and bold refusal to yield to imaginary fears and ungrounded misgivings.

The Eastern countries had borrowed the decadent concepts of the West without subjecting them to critical examination and become the enthusiastic camp-followers of their masters.

In these conditions of inertia, sloth and langour, Iqbal sings praises of the faithful Believer, extols his virtues and exhorts him earnestly to be self-reliant and self-respecting. He shows him his legitimate place in the scheme of creation and seeks to bring him out into the world of action and enterprise, leadership and guidance, power and dignity and self-awareness and self-realisation.

In one of his long Persian poems he addresses the *Momin* in these words:—

"I am amazed at your state. The skies are irradiant because of you but you have ceased to be. How long will you lead a life of ignorance and degradation ? It was from you that the world received its mental and spiritual illumination. You served as a minaret of light during the dark night of the past. The 'luminous hand' (of Moses) was present in your sleeve. But, today, you have shut yourself up in a narrow shell and seem to have forgotten that you can break it. You were present before the world was created and will remain after it has ended. You are afraid of death while death itself should be afraid of you. Death is not lying in wait for you but it is the other way round. Man does not die with the departing of the soul. He dies when faith goes out of him and belief deserts his heart"

The world you see, but Selfhood you can't,
How long in your ignorance will you sit ?

With your ancient flame illumine the night,
The hand of Moses is sleeved in you.
Set forth your foot from the circling skies;
Greater and older than these you are;
You fear death, O imperishable man!
Death is but a prey that before you lies.
Life once given, none can take;
It is for lack of faith men swoon and die;
Learn to be a sculptor, even as I,
And haply anew your Selfhood make.

In another poem Iqbal calls upon the Muslim youth to shake off his lethargy and lassitude and join the battle of life in the spirit of a crusader. He says:

"O sleeping bud! Open your eyes like the wakeful narcissus which never takes a nap nor falls asleep. The enemy has encroached upon our home and rendered us destitute. Will the sound of the nightingale, the call of the *Azan* and the cry of the broken heart not rouse you from slumber?

"The sun has set out on its journey again, and, in the ocean of darkness the oars of brilliant dayspring have come back into motion. The caravans have packed their luggage in the desert and drums of departure have sounded. But O wakeful eye that was the guardian of mankind and protector of the weak! Thou art still lost in sleep and oblivious of the vast changes that are taking place in the world.

"Your sea has become motionless. There is no trace of movement in it, no sign of agitation in its waves. What kind of a sea it is that does not contain even one high-rising tide or a monster. Your sea should have swept over its coast and into the hills and plains. O truthful Muslim! Country is like the earthen body while the soul is related to faith. You must, therefore, rise with the Word of God in one hand and the unsheathed sword in the other for in their combination lies the good fortune of mankind and the advantage of civilisation.

"O Believer! You are the custodian of the Eternal Order and the confidant of Allah. Your arm is the arm of God. Though a creature of clay the existence of the world is dependant on you. Drink the wine of belief and rise above doubt and uncertainty. Against the deceitful charm of the West there is no redress. I cry mercy against the conjuror who, sometimes, allures and, sometimes, binds in chains, who plays the roles of both Shirin[1] and Parvez[2]. The world has been laid desolate by its despoliation. O founder of Harem ! O builder of Kaᶜaba ! O son of Ibrahim ! Awake out of your deep slumber for the reconstruction of the world".

Little flower fast asleep, rise narcissus-like and see,
Our bower has been laid waste by cold griefs; arise !
By the wail of nightingale, by the *Muezzin's* call; arise !
Listen to the burning sighs of the passionate hearts and rise.

Now that the sun has tied its ornament on the brow of morn,
And in its ear put the crimson pendant of its heart's blood;
In the mountain and in the plain caravans have broken camp,
Bright and world-beholding eyes for surveying the world, arise !

All the Orient lies strewn like the roadway's dust,
Like a hushed wail, like a wasted sigh;
Yet each atom of this earth is quickened by a glance,
From Ind and Samarkand, from Iraq and Hamdan rise !

1. Farhad's beloved who typifies feminine charm and sweetness
2. The king, in the legend of Farhad, who symbolises ruthless despotism.

As placid your ocean as only a desert can be,
What an ocean which neither does rise nor ever recedes ?
What an ocean that never knows a storm or an alligator possess ?
Rend its breast and like a swelling tide, arise!

Listen to this truth that all mystery reveals,
Empire is the body and true Religion the soul,
Body lives and soul lives by the life their union gives,
With lance and sword, cloak and prayer-mat arisen!
Out of heavy sleep, heavy sleep arise!
Out of slumber deep arise!

In another Urdu *Ghazal* Iqbal says:

The morning breeze has conveyed the message to me:
Kingship is the lot of those who realise themselves.
Your life is from it and so your honour,
If the Ego endures there is glory, or else disgrace;
In the circle of my poetry are being raised,
Beggars who possess the demeanour of kings;
You are the hunter of the Phoenix; only the beginning it is,
The world of fish and fowl has not been created in vain ;
An Arab or a Persian, your *There is no God but He!*
A meaningless phrase if the heart does not affirm.

The poet, again, exhorts Muslims in these words in a poem of rare simplicity and appeal:

"O Believer! All the things that are contained in the heavens and the earth, the planets, the rivers, the mountains and the forests are transitory. Only you are everlasting. Whatever exists in the world has been subjugated to you. But you are sadly ignorant. How long will you run after the world? Either spurn it or make it bend to your will There is no other way."

All life is voyaging, all things in motion,
Moon, stars and fish and fowl!
Angels and ministering spirits, your soldiers,
You are the champion, the leader of the army;
Of your own worth you have no notion,
Oh that blindness, that insolvency.
How long the slavery of the world of matter?
The choice is yours; be a monk or a king.

Iqbal never tires of warning the Muslim youth against the perils of imitating a civilisation that treats the world not as a thing of the heart and soul and a place for the development of the human Ego but as a market-place, a wine-shop, a gambling-den, a field of battle for profit and gain and a theatre of war for overlordship and supremacy.

10

SATAN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

In the final collection of Iqbal's poems called, *Armughan-i-Hejaz* (The Gift From Arabia), and published posthumously, is included a poem of original structural significance, *Iblis Ki Majlis-i-Shura* (Satan's Advisory Council). In it, the poet has used the medium of the presiding genius of the Order of Ignorance, the Devil himself, to give artistic expression to his highly characteristic philosophical ideas. The evil spirits of the world are shown to have gathered together in order to ponder over the new developments that are proving a stumbling block to their nefarious designs and ambitions. The disciples of Satan put forward their views and suggestions which he examines and, then, gives his own verdict based on a vast experience of men and matters. The henchmen of Satan are deeply impressed by what their leader tells and his assessment of the situation finds a ready acceptance with them.

The sum and substance of Satan's viewpoint is that the Muslim is the real enemy. He is the spark that can, at any time, burst into a blazing flame and destroy the entire demonical system. Wisdom, therefore, demands that all their resources and energies should be directed against this chief adversary, and, if he cannot be annihilated he should, at least, be lulled into a state of complacency and self-satisfaction.

The portrait of the Muslim is drawn in the poem with consummate skill and profound sensitiveness and other faiths and

philosophies and their leaders have also been discussed.

The poem opens with an address by Satan in the course of which he remarks:

The old game of elements, this lowly world,
Graveyard of hopes of the dwellers of ninth heaven.
Towards its destruction the Lord, today, is inclined,
Who had called it the world of *Be, and it is.*
I showed the Frank the path of Imperialism,
The spell of church, mosque and temple I broke.
To the pauper I taught the cult of Fate,
And to the wealthy the craze of Capitalism I gave.
Who can cool down the blazing flame,
In whose fury is the inner heat of Satan?
Whose branches be high with our watering,
That ancient tree who can uproot?

After the inaugural address the first adviser submits that no one can doubt the stability of the Satanic Order which has firmly established its hold on the king and the beggar alike. The masses are reconciled to their lot and they accept willingly the squalor and wretchedness of their position. Their hearts have grown so insensitive that desire is never born in them, and, if it ever is, it quickly dies or changes into a wishful dream. The adviser asserts that it is due to their sustained efforts that the *Mulla* (theologian) and the *Sufi* (mystic), who enjoy leadership among the Muslims, have come to terms with monarchy in which supreme power is vested in an individual. The *Sufi* imagines that spirituality, God-realisation and mysticism do not extend beyond *Quwwali* (devotional music) and *Hal* (mystic raptures). In the same way, the learning and scholarship of the *Mulla* is confined to polemics and metaphysical subtleties. Those who were entrusted with the religious and political leadership of the people have themselves become the slaves and sycophants of despotic rulers and tyrannical sovereigns. The religious ceremonies of Islam are still observed, the Haj pilgrimage and

circumambulation of the House of Ka'aba are even now carried out but the spirit of world leadership and guidance has deserted the Muslims. Their sword has lost its sharpness and the limit of despair is that consensus has been reached among them, so to speak, on the prohibition of *Jehad*.

> The Satanic Order is, surely, supreme,
> Thanks to it, masses in serfdom have matured.
> Since eternity prostration has been the lot of the poor,
> Their inclination is towards *Namaz* bereft of *Qayam*.
> Ambition, in the first place, is never born,
> And if it ever is, it dies or becomes a wishful dream.
> The miracle of our endeavour is that today,
> *Mulla* and *Sufi* are Sovereign's sychophants.
> For the Easterner's disposition this opium is best,
> Or else no better than *Qawwali* scholasticism is.
> What if the *Haj* and *Tawaf*[1] are still performed,
> The unsheathed sword of the Muslim has lost its edge.
> Whose defeat is this reasoning, this latest fiat,
> *Jehad* to Muslim is forbidden in the present Age?

The second adviser, then, mentions democracy as the chief cause of peril.

> Clamour for the rule of the people—is it good or evil?
> Of the mischief of present times you are hopelessly unaware.

Upon it the first adviser remarks that he apprehends no danger from democracy which is only an attractive veil worn by autocracy to hide its ugly face. It is, after all, they who have designed the apparel of democracy for monarchical or obligarchic rule. It is their own creation. "When people get tried of despotism and begin to think in terms of freedom and human dignity and we feel that a threat is developing to our supremacy," he goes on, "We try to placate them by placing the

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1. Circumambulation of the House of Ka'aba

doll of democracy in their hands. Popular representatives and elected ministers are only the symbols of autocracy with a different name. Monarchy does not rest with a particular individual. It means the exploitation of man by man and the usurpation of other people's wealth by force or fraud. It has nothing to do with an individual, group or party. The democratic system of the West is not free from taint. Its outward aspect is bright but inwardly it is as dark as any unjust system of political organisation can be."

Be it as may, my experience of the world tells,
Why fear a system which is monarchy's veil?
We have dressed up monarchy in democratic attire,
When man has shown awareness of his rights
The reality of monarchic order is different,
It's not dependent on the existence of kings.
Be it the House of People or the Court of Parvez,
Who covets the harvest of others is a king.
Have you not seen that democracy of the West,
Is bright outwardly but inwardly dark as Chengiz ?

After this comforting explanation the third adviser heaves a sigh of relief and says that if such be the csae there is no harm in democracy but what answer does one have to the frightful menace which is the handiwork of that hateful, stateless Jew, Karl Marx, who without being an Apostle is held in an equal religious reverence by his followers. Undoubtedly, Marx was a revolutionary by temperament but since he was unblest with Divine guidance he ended up as a 'Moses without an epiphany' and a 'Christ without a crucifix' and failed to give a correct lead to the world. He was a rebel against religion and a rejector of Scriptures yet his own book *Des Kapital* is regarded by the Communists as gospel and Communism is being propagated with the authoritativeness of a revealed faith. His doctrine has shaken the world and through the theory of class struggle he has set the proletariat against the bourgeoisie and sown the seeds of hatred

and enmity among nations.

Till the spirit of kingship lasts there's nothing to fear,
But what answer have we to the mischief of the Jew ?
That Moses without a Glimpse, that Christ without a Crucifix,
No Apostle is he yet carries a Book under arm.
How terrible, indeed, is that infidel's piercing glance,
Day of Reckoning for nations of East and West !
What perversity is greater than this, I ask,
Slaves have torn the ropes of their masters' tents ?

It is now the turn of the fifth adviser to speak. "Though the conjurors of the West," says he, "are your own disciples I have not much faith in their wisdom. The *Samri*[1] *Jew* (Karl Marx, who is the reincarnation of Mazdak) is playing havoc with the human race. He has bewitched the world so completely that everyone who is inferior in age, rank or position is at loggerheads with those who are superior. Even scoundrels are claiming equality with kings. We, at first, ignored the menace but it has been growing day by day and now it has assumed such proportions that the earth trembles at the thought of what lies in store for it. Your leadership is in peril and the world on which your authority rests is doomed."

Conjurors of the West though all your disciples be,
I have little faith left in their wisdom now.
The Jewish mischief-monger, the re-incarnation of Mazdak,
His madness is about to tear every robe into shreds.
The crow with the falcon equality claims,
How quickly the temper of time is changed !
Over the skies frenziedly it has spread,
What we had thought to be a handful of dust.

1. The maker of the Golden Calf.

Such an awe has this budding menace struck,
That the brooks, the hills and the yonder mountains shake.
The world, my Lord! is about to crumble,
The world that depends upon your leadership alone.

Finally, Satan speaks out his mind and lays down the plan of action for the future. "These movements and ideologies," he declares, "hold no terror for me. I am still in control of the affairs of the world. No upheaval takes place anywhere in which I do not have a hand. The world will have a taste of my puissance the moment I decide to start a war among nations, or, more specially, to warm up the blood of European peoples. Men will, then, rush at each-other's throats like wolves and tear one another to pieces. The spirituality of the ecclesiastics and the perspicacity of the statesmen will be of no benefit to them once I whisper into their ears. They will begin to behave like lunatics".

Communism does not impress Satan because it strives against nature and seeks to abolish inequality by means of dialectics. How can these crackbrained eccentrics frighten him?

The world of hue and scent I hold in my hand,
The earth, the planets, the skies, layer after layer.
The spectacle East and West will, surely, see,
Once I warmed up the blood of nations.
Leaders of politics, dignitaries of the Church,
A vocative particle of mine can drive them crazy.
The fool who imagines the world a glassblower's workshop,
Let him try to break the goblets of this civilization !
Garments that have been by the hands of Providence rent,
By the needle of Mazdakite dialectics can never be stitched.
Can the Communist scoundrels strike terror in me,
The wretched souls, distracted in mind, incoherent of speech ?

Satan adds that if he ir afraid of anyone it is the Muslim *Millet* in whose ashes the sparks of faith and embers of resoluteness are still hidden. Though, on the whole, it has fallen on evil days there is no lack of outstanding individual in it. Its solidarity has been destroyed and it is falling to pieces yet it can still boast of deep-hearted men who can alter the course of history and turn defeat into victory. Such men of endeavour and determination are even now found among Muslims who leave their beds before the peep of day and devote themselves to prayer and supplication, whose nights are spent in lamentation, wail and invocation and who perform the *Wadu*[1] with the tears of the early morn. Their midnight worship is their chief weapon. Islam, not Communism, is the menace of tomorrow, the threat of the future.

> If any fear attends me, it is from the people whose
> ashes yet the spark of Desire contain,
> Occasionally still, I see among them men who with tears
> perform the *Wadu*[1] in the early morn.
> He who knows the secrets of history knows,
> That Communism is not morrow's menace, but Islam.

Satan knows that the Muslims have deviated from the path of the Quran, they have forgotten the Islamic programme of life and the love of worldly possessions and self-seeking have become their creed and he is also aware that the future of the East is very dark, the Ulema of Islam and its leaders do not possess the light that dispels gloom, and their sleeve does not contain the 'luminous hand' yet it is quite possible that the exigencies of time may jolt this community out of its stupor and make it return to Islam. "You are ignorant of the efficacy and comprehensiveness of the 'faith of Mohammad' and the *Shariat* of Islam", says Satan to his advisers. "This glowing, incandescent *Shariat* protects the institution of family, safeguards the

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1. Ablution performed before prayer.

rights of men and women, and establishes a clean and healthy society. The creed of Islam is the creed of honour and dignity, purity and trustworthiness, courage and compassion, generosity and large-heartedness and piety and cleanliness. It puts an end to every kind of injustice, falsehood and servility. There are no distinctions of high and low, rich and poor in it. Kings and beggars are alike in its sight. Its system of *Zakat*[1] is based on a fair and balanced concept of wealth. It treats the wordly goods to be a trust of God and sets down the rights of the poor in them. By the emphatic declaration that the earth belongs to God and not to rulers it has brought about a revolution in the minds of men. Our endeavour should, therefore, be to keep this faith hidden from the view of the world. It is good that the Muslims themselves have turned away from the Straight Path and got steeped in mysticism and polemics. Keep the Muslim *Millet* engrossed in sleep by patting it gently lest it woke up and threw the entire Satanic Order into jeopardy with its mighty *Takbirs*. Let us hold the *Momin* back from the field of action so that he may be beaten on all fronts of life and fail to play his role on the stage of history. The enslavement of the Islamic World is essential for the success of the systems of colonialism and exploitation and the way to it is to go on administering to the Muslims the dope of poetry, mysticism, contentment and renunciation. The more the Muslim is enamoured by the monastic way of life and remains fond of omens, charms, rituals and ceremonies the more will he be driven away from the world of active effort. Remember that I fear the awakening of the Muslim *Millet* because it means the awakening of the whole of mankind and not a mere community. In this *Millet* the bond between man and the universe is firmly established and self-introspection goes side by side with the close study and supervision of the world."

1 Poor-Due

That from the Quran they have departed, I know,
And Capitalism is now the creed of the Believer.
In the pitch-dark night that upon the East has fallen,
The wise-men of *Harem* are without the light of faith.
But from the exigencies of the Age I fear,
That the Law of the Prophet may re-appear.
Beware of the Law of the Prophet ! A hundred times beware !
The safeguarder of women's honour, tester of men, maker of men.
The voice of death for all forms of slavery,
There is no distinction of the ruler and the ruled in its domain.
It purges wealth of foulness,
And the rich trustees of their goods it makes.
Can a more dreadful thing than this ever be—
The earth belongs to God and not to kings ?
The more this Law from the world's view is hidden the better,
Luckily the Muslim himself is devoid of faith.
Let him in meticulous interpretations of the Book his energies waste,
And a helpless groper in the gloom of Theology be.
Whose mighty *Takbirs* the spell of time and space can break,
May his night of decay no day-break see !
You keep him a stranger to the world of deed, I say,
That all his moves on life's chess-board be thwarted.
For him such poetry and mysticism are, indeed, the best,
Which from his eye life's broad spectacle conceal.

Every moment do I at the thought of their awakening tremble,
The real purpose of whose faith is supervision of the universe.

Should fiendish movements and wicked ideologies succeed and a plan of action is drawn up for the annihilation of the Muslims the foremost objective will be to put out the spark of faith that has already become very weak The Devil and his benchmen will, in the first place, aim at destroying the sense of Islamic dignity and self-respect which arouses in the Muslim *Millet* the sentiments of *Jehad* and self-abnegation and induces it to revolt against the forces of evil and inequity. In the poem, *Iblis Ka Paigham Apne Siyasi Farzandon Ke Nam* (Satan's Command to His Political Offspring) Iqbal has drawn pointed attention to it. In it Satan tells his political children that "the *Mujahid*[1] who does not fear poverty, starvation and even death, to make him afraid of privations and hardships it is necessary that the spirit of Mohammad be expelled from his breast, and for destroying the distinctive personality, unity and rugged simplicity of the Arabs you ought to propagate atheism among them. Seize their spiritual heritage from the people of *Harem* and eject Islam from its cradle. And, look, religious pride is still alive among the hardy Afghans. For it you will have to deal sternly with their theologians".

Enmesh in politics the Brahmin—and
From their ancient shrines the twice—born expel.
The man who raked with hunger fears not death—
Mohammad's spirit from his breast expel.
Put Frankish thoughts into Arabia's mind—
Islam from Yemen and Hejaz expel.
Cure for the Afghan's pride of faith ?
The *Mulla* from his mountain and glen expel ;

1. Meaning the fighter in the defense of true faith.

Snatch from the people of *Harem* their traditions—
From Khutan's[1] meadows the Musk deer expel.
Iqbal's breath fans the tulip's flame red—
Such a minstrel from the flower-gardens expel.

Education can be the most appropriate means for the realisation of this end. It can pervert the minds of Muslims by infecting them with skepticism, sensuality and greed. Akbar Allahabadi has commented on the deadliness of the modern educational system in his typical style :

Pharaoh would not have earned notorietv for infanticide,
Had the idea of setting up a college crossed his mind.

Iqbal feels that forces inimical to Islamic interests have been largely successful in their hateful designs. They have, to a great extent, accomplished what they wanted by undermining the religious consciousness of the Muslims and stifling the spirit of *Jehad* in them. The floodtide of materialism is sweeping over the lands of Islam. Iqbal bemoans that during his travels round the Islamic World he saw the representatives of *Abu Lahab*[2] everywhere but those elevated with the spirit of Mohammad were extermely rare.

In Ajam and Arabia I did wander,
Bu Lahab in plenty, Mustafa scarce.

At another place he laments that in the Arab countries the spiritual warmth for which the Arabs were famous has become extinct and in Persia the delicacy and refinement of thought and feeling is a thing of the past. The ringlets of Tigris and Euphrates are lustrous still and the battle between Truth and Falsehood is being fought as ever but Husain[3] from the caravan of Hejaz is missing.

1. A district of Tartary famous for musk
2. Abu Lahab was the name of one of the Prophet's most bitter enemies.
3. Son of Hazrat Ali, and grandson of the holy Prophet, who was martyred at the Battle of Karbala in A. D. 680

On the battle-ground of life no Ghaznavi is left,
Idols of the people of *Harem* have for long been in wait.
In the ardour of Arab's remembrance, in the music of Iranian's thought,
Observations are not of Arabia, ideas not those of Iran.
Not one Husain in the caravan of Hejaz is found,
Tresses of Tigris and Euphrates though are lustrous still.

Iqbal is excessively pained at the spectacle of decay and degeneration the Muslims present all over the world. He tries to arouse the torchbearers of Monotheism by telling them, "O Inheritors of Islamic *Tauheed*[1] ! You posses neither the sweetness of speech which used to win the hearts nor the sternness of action by which you subdued the adversaries. Once your glance used to be all-conquering but now neither charm and appeal is present in you nor spirit and fervour.

O inheritor of *La-Ilah*! In you is left,
The speech of loverhood nor sternness of action.
Hearts in breasts once trembled at your glance,
But in you the Qalandar's passion burns no more.

The poet, again, sorrowfully remarks that the arches and minarets of the mosques are yearning for the *Momin's* genuflexion of love which, sometimes, sent the soul of the earth into raptures and, sometimes, made it quiver with awe. Egypt and Palestine are eager to hear the *Azan* that shook the mountains.

Prostration at which the earth's soul trembled,
Pulpit and arch for it are yearning.
In Egypt and in Palestime I did not hear,
The *Azan* that gave the mountain the creeps.

Sometimes, even an incorrigible optimist like Iqbal is

1. Creed of the Oneness of God.

constrained to observe with a heavy heart :

Love's fire has died out, darkness is complete,
A heap of ashes, not a Muslim is he !

Pearl of life in thy ocean does not exist,
I looked for it in every wave and shell.

And, sometimes, in his anxiety to find an explanation for the melancholy state of affairs Iqbal concludes that as the spark of love has died out in the hearts of Muslims, and the blood of life has frozen in their veins they are no better than living corpses. Confusion has set in their ranks, they have turned against one another and their prostration has degenerated into mockery.

The madness of love is no more,
The blood runs in Muslim's veins no more;
Their prayer-ranks broken, hearts distracted, worship jaded,
Because their inner passion is no more.

All this notwithstanding, Iqbal believes that the Islamic World is coming out of its torpor and the process of regeneration has started in it. In the poem, *Tulu-i-Islam* (Dawn of Islam), he hopefully remarks that the paleness of the stars denotes that the end of the night is near. He is confident that trials and hardships, rebuffs and setbacks, will revive the religious spirit of the Muslims and the hurricane of apostasy will make them more steadfast in faith. A powerful reaction has already set in against the challenge of the Western Civilization the significance of which cannot be explained but only felt.

The faint light of stars tells the daybreak is near,
The sun has risen, gone the period of heavy slumber.
In the East's chill veins life-blood flows again,
Avicanna and Farabi this mystery cannot explain.
The tempest of West has made the Muslim true in faith,
In the tumult of sea pearl's fulfilment lies.

To *Momin* from the Almighty is again to be granted,
The dignity of Turk, the intellect of Indian, the eloquence of Arab.

The Muslim are a restless people. If they are sunk in a state of lethargy today it does not mean that it will always be like that.

Restlessness from mercury can never depart.

The tear in the Muslim's eye is not a mere drop of water but a vernal cloud that causes pearls to be formed in the Ocean of Ibrahim. The Muslim is the Arm and the Tongue of *Allah* and the stars are the particles of dust in his path. He is imperishable because he is the last message of God. He is the custodian of 'all things' and his nature is the trustee of the boundless possibilities of life. Islam and life are the two names of the same reality. The resurgence of Muslims is pre-ordained.

Boundles is thy knowledge, illimitable thy love,
Thou art the choicest note in Nature's harp.

In spite of all the disheartening circumstances Iqbal's faith in the latent potentialities of the Muslim *Millet* is undying.

Of his desolate sowing-field Iqbal shall not despair,
A little rain and the soil is most fertile, O Saqi !

He is convinced that the Western Civilisation has had its day. It can make no further contribution to the happiness of mankind and is already on the way to meet its end.

Jewish usurors have for long been in wait,
Before whose cunning lion's strength is not anything ;
Like ripened fruit the West is about to fall,
Let's see in whose lap it drops.

The Western World is in the throes of death. Its dissolution is an already settled fact.

In Asia nor in Europe life's struggle is on,
Here it is Ego's death, there the death of conscience.
Urge for revolution in the hearts is mounting,
The end of the old world is haply near.

The foundations of the old world, on which the gamblers of

the West have staked their existence, are crumbling and on its ruins a new world is going to be built. Iqbal asserts that only the builders of the House of Kaʿaba and inheritors of the legacy of Ibrahim and Mohammad (Peace of Allah be upon whom) can be the architects of the new world. He calls upon the Muslims to get ready for the task. He appeals to them in the name of Allah, draws their attention to the dreadful plight of the world and speaks to them of the mischief and corruption that is prevalent everywhere as a sequel to the rise of Europe. The earth which had been proclaimed to be sacred as a mosque and on which God was to be remembered has been turned into an ale-house, a gambling-den, a lair of wild beasts and a hide-out of robbers. Time has come for the architects of *Harem* and the bearers of the Divine Message of Islam to resume the leadership of mankind, eradicate the viciousness and injustice spread by the West and build the world again on the lines of Islamic *Shariat*.

> You are the true Guardian of the Eternal Rule,
> You are the left hand and right of the Possessor of the world;
> O creature of clay! You are time and you are space,
> Drink the wine of faith and from doubt's prison rise;
> Out of heavy sleep, heavy sleep arise!
> Out of slumber deep arise!
> Against Europe I cry mercy and against the attraction of the West,
> Woe for Europe and her tyranny and her charm;
> Europe's hordes have laid the world waste,
> Architect of the *Harem* for rebuilding the world awake;
> Out of heavy sleep, heavy sleep arise!
> Out of slumber deep arise!

11

TO THE ARAB LANDS

In one of his selected poems Iqbal expresses the fondest sentiments of love and admiration for the Arab countries. He alludes to the distinction they enjoy of upholding the cause of Islam and coming to the rescue of mankind at a time when it was immersed in Ignorance and recalls the glorious daybreak that changed darkness into light.

At the very outset Iqbal remembers the unique personality through whose efforts the path of progress and deliverance was opened for humanity. He gives a free rein to his feelings and an atmosphere of intense sincerity and exaltation is at once created.

"O Arab," he exclaims. "For whose deserts eternity has been ordained ! O mighty race from which the world, for the first time, heard the thundering proclamation that the tyrannical order of Caesar and Chosroes had come to an end : To which community the Book of Books, the fadeless Quran, was first revealed ? Whom did the Almighty trust with the secret of Monotheism ? Who removed the fictitious deities from the pedestal of Divinity ? In whose land was the torch of Guidance lighted that illumined the world ? Can the name of anyone besides you be taken in reply to these questions ? Knowledge and wisdom, piety and virtue are your gifts to mankind. And all this is the living miracle of the unlettered Prophet who transformed the arid desert into a blooming garden from which the breeze of

freedom and equality blew and springs of culture and civilization flowed to the far-flung regions of the earth. The body of the Arab was without a soul, the heart and the indewelling ego were granted to him; the dust of obscurity and ignorance fell away from his face and he became known to the world. Arts were promoted, sciences were encouraged and the tree of civilisation sent forth new blossoms. From among the holy Apostle's servants arose mighty conquerors, peerless leaders and whole-souled divines to play a decisive role in the struggle between truth and iniquity. The Prophet gave to the world God-fearing crusaders who were horsemen by day and ascetics in the night, who gave the *Azan* under the shadow of swords and offered *Namaz* in the thick of battle. The scimitar of the lofty-minded soldier, Salahuddin, and the glance of the glorious ascetic, Bustami, held the guarantee of success in both the worlds.

"Heart and mind, soul and intellect come together under the comprehensiveness of his message. The mystical insight of Rumi and intellectualism of Razi are merged into one another. Knowledge and wisdom, faith and law, government and administration are indebted to him. The Taj and the Al-Hamara are the resplendent gifts of the illustrious community of his followers to posterity. The splendid Islamic Civilisation is an external manifestation of the Prophet's keen aesthetic sense. Even men of exceptional virtue and holiness cannot form an idea of his inner beauty.

"Before the advent of the Prophet, the 'Mercy to the Worlds', man was a mere handful of dust. His Apostleship endowed him with faith and earnestness and and knowledge and selfawareness."

> May thy lands, thy desert and wilderness, last till the crack of doom,
> Who did the end of Caesear and Chosroes proclaim ?

Who taught the secret of *La Ilah ?*
Where was the lamp at first lighted ?
Touched by the breath of the Unlettered One,
The sands of Arabia began to throw up tulips.
Freedom under his protection has been reared,
The 'today' of nations from his 'yesterday' is.
He put heart into the body of man,
And from his face the veil he lifted.
In the thick of battle the majesty of *Azan*,
The recitation of *As-Saffat*[1] at the point of sword.
The scimitar of Ayubi, the glance of Bayazid,
Key to the treasurers of this world and next.
Ecstasy of heart and mind from the same wine-cup,
Fusion of Rumi's devotion and Razi's thought.
Knowledge and wisdom, faith and law, government and politics,
Hearts in breasts devoid of peace.
Al-Hamara and Taj of breath-taking beauty,
To which even the angels pay tribute ;
These, too, a fragment of his priceless bequest,
Of his countless glimpses only a glimpse.
His exterior these enthralling sights,
Of his interior even the knowing unware.

Before the raising up of the sacred Prophet the Arabs scarcely deserved to be called a civilised people. There was no order or discipline among them. They revelled in anarchy and lawlessness. With little to choose between them and the quadrupeds their understanding of life did not extend beyond eating and drinking. Though their sword shone brilliantly it lacked the edge. Before the dawn of Islam the Arabs grazed the camels but, on coming under its influence, over-ran the world and held a large part of it under their sway. The East and the

1. Title of Sura XXXVII of the Quran meaning, (*Those Who Sot The Ranks*)

West began to resound with *Takbir*.

Truth made thee sharper than sword,
Camel-drivers became the riders of destiny.
Nations have stolen a march on thee,
Thou realised not the worth of thy desert.
From one community thou split into several,
With thine own hands thou hast destroyed unity.
Who'ver broke the bond of Ego perished,
Who'ever fell into line with others was lost.

After eulogising the Islamic valour and the virility of the Arabs and their magnificent spirit of self-surrender it makes Iqbal sad to observe that they have lapsed into inspidity. Discord has taken the place of unity and imitativeness of enterprise. With profound anguish he addresses these words to them : "The whole world is grieving over your apathy and listlessness. Other nations have forged ahead but you did not appreciate the worth of your desert and neglected its message. You were a single community but have now got divided into numerous nations. You were the 'Party of Allah' but today there is no limit to factionalism within your ranks. Don't you know that he who disregards his Individuality and depends on others for help is destroyed and he who abandons his fortress and takes refuge with the enemy suffers humiliation ? The Arabs are their own foemen. They have been unjust to themselves and caused pain to the spirit of the Prophet."

What thou hast done to thyself none else did,
Thou hast caused pain to the spirit of the Prophet.
Ignorant of the witchery of the Frank,
Behold the mischief hidden in his sleeve !
By his diplomacy all nations prostrate,
Unity of the Arabs crushed to pieces.
As long as they are caught in his vicious trap,
The Arabs shall not enjoy a moment's peace.

The poet is cognizant of the treachery and deceitfulnes of

the West and its sinsister designs are apparent to him because he has seen it from close quarters and thoroughly studied its psychology. His heart bleeds at the simplicity of the Arabs who still look to it for sympathy and help. "O dupers!" he calls out to them, "Wake up! You are trusting the West and know nothing of its real intentions. You do not realise how many nations have fallen a prey of its artfulness. Don't you see that it has ruined your unity and divided you into a dozen states, perpetually falling out with each other?" Iqbal's optimism, then, reasserts itself and he ends his lamentation on a note of faith and hope. "Make use of the intellect God has given you," he exhorts them, "and turn the dying spark into a blazing flame. Produce the spirit of Omar bin Khattab within you and know that the true fountain-head of strength is faith which is the real asset of a Muslim in life. O dwellers of the desert! So long as your hearts are the trustees of Divine secrets you are the custodians of faith and sentinels of the world. Your inner self is the criterion of good and evil and you are genuine inheritors of the earth. When your star will rise in the East all the other lights will fade."

O men of insight! Look at the contemporary world,
Recreate within thyself the spirit of Omar.
All strength is from faith,
And faith is conviction, resoluteness, sincerity.
So long as thy conscience is Nature's confidant,
Man of desert is world's sentinel.
Thy unspoilt nature the criterion of good and evil,
With thy appearance a thousand stars fade.
Modern Age a creature of thy times,
Its ecstasy is from thy red wine.
Thou hast been the revealer of its mysteries,
And functioned as the first architect.
Since the West adopted it as child,
It become a courtesan without honour and shame.

Apparently sweet and lovable though,
It is crooked, faithless and impudent.
Bring the imperfect to perfection, O desert-dweller!
And cast Time into thine own mould.

Iqbal says, "The surroundings of the desert may be narrow and stifling but if you develop your Individuality the horizons of your existence will widen beyond measure, you will become faster than wind and no one will be able to stand up to you in the arena of life."

With a heavy heart he asks the Arabs, "Who has pushed you behind in the race of life though the Modern Age is the fruit of your own endeavours? The day the reins of the world passed from your hands into those of the West humanity lost its distinction and hypocrisy and irreligion became its creed.

"O desert-dweller! Realise your worth and significance, arrest the march of time, turn the tide of history and lead the caravan of mankind to its lofty goal and high destination."

Go past wilderness and habitation, hill and dale,
Pitch thy tent within thy being;
Develop thy personality stronger than blast,
Thrust thy camel into the field of strife;
Intellect of the West sword in hand,
Bent like hell on slaughter of man!
The string of gain and loss is in thy control,
Glory of the day-star in the palm of thy hand;
Trustee of the weatlh of faith and civilisation,
Bring the 'luminous hand' out of thy sleeve.

Iqbal addressed the spirit of the Prophet and grieves at the inertia and degradation of Muslims. "Islam has become a stranger in its own home," says he. "Confusion has set in among your followers and their solidarity has gone to wrack and ruin. Where are they to go? What should they do? The Arabian Sea has lost its tumult and the Arabs their passion. Who is there now to bring solace to me, to apply balm to the wounds

of my heart ? In the long and tedious journey of life the *Hadi Khwan*[1] of thy Ummat is disturbed and distressed. The destination is nowhere in sight. For the sake of God, take pity on the woeful state of thy followers and come to their rescue."

> The *Millat*[2] is in shambles, into disorder it has been thrown,
> Tell us yourself, O Prophet, which way should your faithful turn ?
> Now no more the Arabian Sea with love of tumult foams,
> Which way should the tempest concealed within me turn ?
> Though there is no caravan left, no camal, no provision here ?
> From this rocky desert which way shall *Hadi Khwan* turn ?
> Now at last, Oh spirit of Mohammad, unravel this knot,
> Which way should the guardian of Divine verses turn ?

It is most hurtful to Iqbal that in spite of repeated experiences the Muslims should still regard the Western Powers friendly and sympathetic and look up to them for the solution of their problems, specially that of Palestine, and forget that the West is dominated by the Jews and its political, economic and cultural life is virtually controlled by them. He remarks, "I know that the flame of life that once burnt so brightly among the Arabs is even now alive and can brust forth at any time ; I am also convinced that the solution of their difficulties does not lie with London or Geneva but in the development of their Ego." In

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1. *Hadi* is the song the camel-drivers of Arabia sing while leading a caravan. *Hadi Khwan* means the singer of *Hadi*.
2. The term *Millet-i-Marhoom* used in the original means the community on which God may have mercy. It denotes the Muslims.

the end, he ventures to address these forceful words to the leaders of the Arab World : "O People of Arabia ! You were the first to appreciate the reality of Faith and you also know that loyalty to the sacred Prophet demands a complete break with Abu Lahab. Islam and Apostasy are utterly opposed to each other. In the same way, Islam is intolerant of nationalism, as of all other materialistic ideologies, and the Islamic World is not the name of certain territories but signifies whole-hearted devotion to the holy Prophet and unqualified dedication to the Islamic faith."

May this Indian Apostate also speak—
If it be not disrespectful to Arab leaders ?
To which community was the truth first revealed :
Allegiance to Mohammad turning away from Bu Lahab is ?
Frontiers and territories do not the Arab World make,
Its existence from Mohammad of Arabia is !

12

THE MOSQUE OF CORDOVA

In 1932 Iqbal visited Spain and also went to see the Mosque of Cordova. It was not an ordinary sight-seeing trip by a tourist interested in ancient monuments but a pilgrimage to an outstanding symbol of faith and inner richness by an ardent believer and a warm-hearted poet. It was an undertaking of love and loyalty by a celebrated Muslim to pay his tearful homage to the spiritual legacy of Abdul Rahman el-Dakhil and his companions.

Iqbal was moved to the core of his being by the grandeur and solemnity of the Mosque and the deep emotional response its awe-inspiring sight evoked in him found expression in the immortal poem called, *Masjid-i-Qartaba* (The Mosque of Cordova). Iqbal viewed it as a cultural landmark of Islam and in its walls and arches, domes and minarets, decorations and engravings he saw an eloquent portraiture of the Believer's moral excellence, aesthetic refinement, high-mindedness, sincerity, piety and devotion.

The Mosque reminded Iqbal of its builders, of their keen appreciation of artistic beauty, and of the noble ideas and ideals, call and message, they upheld in life and propagated in the world. Its tall, stately minarets revived the memory of the spell-binding *Azan* that once used to rise from them and which people heard every day at the beginning and end of the toils and stresses of life. The *Azan* is a grand peculiarity of the

Muslim *Millet*. It is a symbol of its unity and solidarity. It may, indeed, be described as the National Anthem of Muslims the like of which is not to be found in the entire fund of speech-sounds of any other community. The call it gives and the message it conveys are truly unique. At one time the soul of the universe trembled and the foundations of the citadels of falsehood shook at the sound of it.

It was the Islamic *Azan* that heralded the dawn of a new morning and dispelled the gloom that had enveloped the world in the 6th Century A.D. Iqbal recalls the Divine Message and Celestial Guidance the *Azans* used to carry to the four corners of the world and the depth and intensity of their significance. The more he ponders over it the more is he convinced that the *Millet* which is endowed with this eternal call and lives according to this everlasting message is, also, imperishable.

The beautiful yet poignant scene, the historical monument, the splendid Mosque (whose pulpit for centuries had remained deprived of sermons, courtyard and arches of genuflexion and minarets of *Azan*) touched every chord of his heart and reactivised the unhealed wounds. The ocean of his feelings was stirred and waves of faith and awareness, ardour and eagerness and music and melody, mingled with those of pain and disappointment, grief and anguish, began to rise in it. It was in these circumstances that the enthralling poem, *Masjid-i-Qartaba*, was conceived, part of which was written in Cordova itself and the rest was completed during his stay in Spain.

The poem is a masterpiece of poetic inspiration and artistic expression. For beauty of diction and richness of emotion it is unsurpassed. In it Iqbal says that the material world is not everlasting. It is transitory, and, with it, all the wonders of art and architecture, historical buildings and ancient monuments, are heading towards ruin and destruction. But such constructions are an exception that are touched by the messianic hand of a man of God and a devoted Believer and shine with the radiance

of his love.

Love is the essence of life. It is deathless. The march of time is irresistible. It rolls on like a torrent, carrying violently away everything that impedes its onward movement. But love stands up to it; it stems all opposing waves for it, too, is not different from a flood-tide, a deluge.

Love transcends time and space and its wondrous possibilities are beyond human comprehension. There are states and stages of love that are not known to anyone. The effulgence of love is common to all Divine Apostleships and sacred teachings.

Colour and radiance, joy and fragrance of all the universe is from love. It is the purifying draught (from the Fountain of Paradise) that sends saints and poets into ecstasy. It reveals itself, sometimes, in the form of a preacher from the pulpit, and, sometimes, as a philosopher and conqueror. Love has a thousand facets. It is a many-splendoured thing. It is an eternal wayfarer, a perpetual traveller. It is always on the move, restless, mercurial.

Love is the flute of life from which melodies pour forth and enrapture the world. Light and heat, activity and movement, ardour and enthusiasm are all from it.

Chain of days and nights—artificer of all events
Chain of days and nights – fountain of life and of death!
Chain of days and nights – thread of two-coloured silk
Of which the Being makes the robe of His Attributes!
Chain of days and nights—sigh of eternity's music
Where He of all possibility sounds the height and depth!
Thee it puts to test and me it puts to test,
Day and night in procession, testers of all this world.
If thou art of less value and if I am of less value,
Find in death our reward and in dissolution our wage.

Of your day and night what other meaning but this—
One long current of time, devoid of dawn and sunset?
All those masterpieces of Art, transitory and impermanent;
All in this world is of sand, all in this world is of sand!
Death the beginning and end, death to the visible and hidden;
New be the pattern or old, its final halting-place is death.
Yet in this design of things, something unending endures,
Wrought by some man of God into perfection's mould;
Some high mortal whose work shines with the light of love,
Love is the essence of life, death to which is forbidden.
Long current of Time, strong and swift though it is,
Love itself is a tide, stemming all opposite waves;
In the almanac of Love, apart from the present time,
Other ages exist, ages which have no name.
Love is the breath of Gabriel, Love is the Prophet's heart,
Love the envoy of God, Love the utterance of God;
Under the ecstasy of Love our mortal clay is bright,
Love is an unripe wine, Love is a cup for the noble.
Love is the legist of *Harem*, Love is the commander of hosts,
Love is the son of travel, countless its habitations;
Love is the plectrum that plucks songs from the chords of life,
Love is the brightness of life, Love is the fire of life.

After this long prologue Iqbal turns to the Mosque and addresses these words to it: "O Mosque of Cordova! For thy existence and thy glory thou art indebted to love, to the tender passion, that is immortal. In this way, thou, too, art eternal.

"Philosophy, art and poetry, or any other form of literary or artistic activity, is shallow and insincere if it is not fed with the blood of the heart.. It is no more than an empty structure of word and sound, paint and oil, or brick and stone, possessing neither life nor beauty nor freshness. Works of art, of whatever excellence they may be, cannot endure without the intensity of inner passion, depth of love and profundity of earnestness. It is love which distinguishes man from a sculptured figure. When a drop of love's warm blood falls upon a piece of marble it turns it into a beating heart and if even a man's heart is destitute of love it is a slab of stone.

"O magnificent Mosque! In love and eagerness we both are alike. There is a mystical affinity between you and me. Man, in his creation, is a handful of dust but his heart is the envy of the ninth heaven. The human heart is also lit up with the lustre of Divinity and the joy of Presence. Angels, indeed, are famous for unending genuflexion but the warmth and delight of human prostration has not been granted to them."

Referring to his Indian and Brahmin origin Iqbal says, "Look at the fervour and earnestness of this Indian infidel! He was born and brought up in the home of infidelity but his lips and heart are constantly engaged in prayer and invocation, benediction and salutation. On meeting you in this strange land he has become a picture of intentness and devotion. There obtains a complete uniformity and understanding between your soul and mine!"

> Oh Shrine of Cordova, thou owest existence to love,
> Deathless in all its being, stranger to Past and Present.
> Colour or brick and stone, speech or music and song,
> Only the heart's warm blood feeds the craftsman's design;
> One drop of hearts's blood lends marble a beating heart,
> Out of the heart's blood flow out warmth, music and mirth.

Thine the soul-quickening air, mine the soul-quickening verse,
From thee the pervasion of men's hearts, from me the opening of men's hearts.
Inferior to the Heaven of Heavens, by no means the human breast is,
Handful of dust though it be, hemmed in the azure sky.
What if prostration be the lot of the heavenly host?
Warmth and depth of prostration they do not ever feel.
I, a heathen of Ind, behold my fervour and my ardour,
Salat[1] and *Durood*[2] fill my soul, *Salat* and *Durood* are on my lips!
Fervently sounds my voice, ardently sounds my lute,
Allah Hu[3], like a song, thrilling through every vein!

On beholding this marvel of architecture Iqbal is reminded of the real Muslim, the true Believer, whom only Islam can produce and, with it, the mighty *Ummat* also emerges on the surface of his mind from which the splendour of the Mosque is.

In Iqbal's view the Mosque of Cordova, in the totality of its appearance and effectiveness, is a material manifestation of the *Momin.* In its beauty and elegance, height and width, gracefulness and solidity, fineness and strength it is his exact replica. Its imposing pillars remind Iqbal of the oases of Arabia and in its balconies and latticed windows he sees the gleams of Heavenly effulgence. He regards its towering minarets to be the descending points of Divine mercy and the halting places of the angels. Overcome with emotion he cries out: "The Muslim is imperish-

1 & 2. Invocation to God to bestow His choicest favours and blessings on the Prophet.

3. Meaning *He is God*

able, he shall not die, because he is the bearer of the message of Abraham and Moses and of all the Divine Apostles."

Iqbal asserts that the Mosque of Cordova is a true symbol of the beliefs, thoughts and aspirations of the Muslim *Millet*, and just as the Muslim *Millet* is free from all the narrow and unnatural concepts of race and nationality it, too, represents a marvellous synthesis of Arab and Persian cultures and typifies a remarkable supra-national fraternity. The Muslim is above territorial limitations and his world is boundless. The beauty and warmth of his message is all-pervading. The Tigris and the Euphrates of Iraq, the Ganges and the Jumna of India, the Danube of Europe and the Nile of Egypt are but a wave in his shore-less sea. His achievements are unequalled in history. It was the Muslim *Millat* that gave the command to the outworn ages to depart and ushered in the modern world.

Members of the Islamic *Millet* are the torch-bearers of compassion and fellow-feeling and true specimens of faith and fraternisation. The tongue of the *Momin* is like a gem-showering cloud and his scimitar is well-tempered. He is contended at heart and persevering in action. Even on the battlefield and under the shadow of swords he is the upholder of Monotheism and Apostleship and the pursuer of the path of piety and righteousness. In the struggle between truth and falsehood faith is his weapon and reliance upon God his armour.

> Thou, in beauty and dignity, man of God's witness,
> He is beautiful and dignified, thou art beautiful and dignified.
> Firm are thy foundations, numberless are thy pillars,
> Soaring like ranks of palms over the Syrian desert.
> Light of the Valley of Peace gleams on thy walls and roof,
> On thy minaret's height Gabriel stands in glory.
> The Muslim shall not perish for by his *Azan*,
> The secret of Moses and Abraham is revealed.

Limitless in his world, boundless his long horizon,
Tigris and Danube and Nile but a wave in his sea.
His times are wondrous, his legends are strange,
To the ages outworn he gave the command to depart.
Saqi of men of taste, horseman of the realm of desire,
Pure and unmixed his wine, tempered and glittering his steel.
Warrior armed in the mail of *La Ilah*,
Under the shadow of swords succoured by *La Ilah*.

The poet, again, says to the Mosque that "you are the interpretation of the *Momin's* dream in the world, the exposition of his high-mindedness and the exemplification of his soul in brick and mortar.

. "The hand of the *Momin*, in power and dominance, in the dispersal of difficulties and the fulfilment of needs, is the Hand of God and an instrument of Providence. Apparently, he is born of clay but, in reality, he has the nature of Light. There is the reflection of Divine Attributes in his being. He is indifferent to the allurements of the world. His desires are few but his aims are high. He is the embodiment of grace and strength, love and sternness. He is gentle of speech but warm in quest. In peace he is soft like silk but in war hard as steel.

"The faith of the Believer is the pivot on which the world turns. His existence is the essence of creation and all the rest an illusion. In him thought and intellect and faith and love find their highest expression. Strength and felicity in life and beauty and elegance in the world owe their presence to him. He is the end and object of the pilgrimage of love and the heart and soul of the universe."

Behold in thy stones are all the Believer's secrets,
Fire of passionate days, rapture of melting nights.
High is his station and great his thoughts are,
Ecstasy, burning desire, self-abasement and pride.

The hand of the *Momin* is the Hand of Allah—
Dominant, resourceful, creative, ensuring success.
Fashioned of dust and light, slave with the Master's attributes,
His heart is indifferent to the riches of the worlds.
His earthly hopes are few, his aims are high,
Courtesy in his mien, gaining all hearts with his glance;
He is soft of speech but fierce in the hour of pursuit,
In war and in peace pure in thought and in act.
The point of God's great compass the Believer's firm faith,
All this universe else—shadow, illusion, deceit.
He is the goal of love, he is the end of Love,
He, in the circle of the firmament, sets all spirits aglow.

Iqbal proceeds to pay a tribute of never-fading charm to the Mosque. "Thou art the Mecca of the seekers of Art", he says, "the place of pilgrimage for the devotees of love and the symbol of the glory of Islam. Thanks to thee, the soil of Cordova is vying for sacredness and elevation with the heavens. If anything can compare with thee it is the heart of the true Believer." Here Iqbal loses control of his feelings. He looks at the distant past and centuries roll back in his imagination. He begins to live in the period of Muslim ascendency in Spain. Combining romanticism with classicism he asks, "Where are the Moorish horsemen, the men of virtue, the embodiments of faith and the champions of truth? Where has their unrelenting caravan stopped? Where have the Arab rulers, the precursors of European Renaissance, gone whose government was another name for social justice and public welfare?"

Iqbal feels that Spain still bears the floral imprint of Arab blood. Oriental charm, hospitality and sincerity can even now be seen among its people. Its air is filled with the scent of Najd and Yemen and the music of Iraq and Arabia reverberates in its atmosphere.

Shrine of the seekers of art! Glory of the manifest Faith!
Thou Andalusia's soil sacred as Mecca hast made.
If there is underneath the sky beauty equal to thine,
Nowhere shall it be found, but in the Muslim's heart.
Ah, those champions of Right, those fearless horsemen of Arabia,
Bearers of high morality, knights of the truth and faith!
By their rule this strange secret to all was revealed,
Men of pure hearts hold sway, not to enslave, but to serve.
East and West by their eyes gained instruction,
In the darkness of Europe their minds showed the path.
Even today Andalusia, rich with their blood, is seen,
Gay and friendly of heart, simple and bright of face;
Even today in this land, eyes like the soft gazelle's,
Dart their glances, giving pleasure to the hearts;
Even today in its breeze fragrance of Yemen endures,
Even today in its songs echoes subsist of Hejaz.

In the midst of these sorrowful recollections Iqbal's imagination is fired with the desire for change. He says that though the land of Andalusia enjoys the high position of the heavens it has not heard the *Azan* for ages and in spite of the fact that winds of revolution are blowing in the world there is no evidence of a ripple in its stagnant waters. Martin Luther's movement of Protestant Reformation in Germany not only led to the decline of Papal authority and the extinction of the hegemony of the Church but it also made its impact on language, literature and civilization and paved the way for the cultural revival of Europe. The philosophy of Rousseau and Voltaire brought about the Revolution of France and set the stage for the emergence of the industrial era. Conservative Italy, too, is showing signs of

regeneration.

Against this background Iqbal yearns for an Islamic revolution. He believes that the revolutionary spirit of Muslims is also uneasy but one does not know when it is going to assert itself. To *Vadi-El-Kabir* (Guadalquiver) he says: "On your bank a stranger is seeing the image of the future in the mirror of the past. Fascinating though the dream is, it is so intolerable to Europe that it cannot listen calmly to my plain-speaking."

The destiny of nations is forged in strife and revolt. Those who watch their steps carefully and analyse their feelings and keep an eye on their mental processes are successful in life and make their mark in history. About art and thought, poetry and literature Iqbal once again emphasises that a philosophy which is not written with the bood of the heart is no more than a mental exercise. The vital flame, the breath of life, is missing from it. Likewise, the greatest works of art fade into oblivion if the blood of the artist does not flow into them and music that does not spring from the depths of the soul is transient and superficial. This is Iqbal's concept of art as well as of life.

> Thy land is like the heavens in the sight of the stars —
> For ages, alas, thy atmosphere has remained bereft of the *Azan*.
> In what dale and glen, in what stage of the journey,
> Love's undaunted caravan now happens to be?
> Germany saw, long ago, Change and Revolution—
> Obliterating the old ways, sweeping away every trace;
> Holiness of the Pope fast became an erroneous word,
> Thought in its fragile boat launched on its dangerous course;
> The eye of France, also, has seen Revolution rage,
> That overturned the world the Westerners had known;
> The Roman nation, old and tired with ancient traditions,
> With the joy of Rejuvenation discovered again her youth.

Now that tempest has seized even the soul of Islam,
A Divine secret it is whose meaning cannot be told by the tongue.
Watch! from the surface of this ocean what portents finally emerge,
What new turn the blue revolving dome takes!
Drowned in the twilight is the cloud in the mountain gorge;
The sun has left behind heaps of the rubies of Badakhshan.
Running water of Guadalquiver! on your bank is a stranger,
Lost in his thoughts, dreams of another age.
Behind the Destiny's curtain the new world is yet concealed,
But to mine eyes its dawn already stands unveiled.
Were I to lift the veil from the face of my thoughts,
Europe could not endure the burning heat of my songs.
Death, not life, is the life in which no revolution takes place,
Strife and revolt are the sustenance of nations' souls.
Keen as a sword that nation is in the hand of Fate,
Which at every moment takes account of its works and deeds.
Works of creation are incomplete without the heart's warm blood,
Music, an immature frenzy, without the heart's warm blood.

13

ARDOUR AND EAGERNESS

It was on a lovely morning, in 1931, that the delegates of *Motamar-i-Islami* (International Islamic Conference) set their feet on the blessed soil of Jerusalem. The air was refreshing, the surroundings were delightful, the sun had just risen spreading its golden rays on all sides. The pleasant hour of the early dawn has always fascinated the poets. Our poet and philosopher, Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, who had come from Europe to represent the Muslims of India at the *Motamar*, also, was captivated by the ethereal beauty of the time and the absorbing attractiveness of the place. He saw everything around him eagerly and gave a free rein to his imagination.

The land of Palestine with clouds of various shades, from silver to dark grey, gliding through the air, with its green mountains, lilies and cypresses, with the gentle drafts of the morning breeze, the leaves of the date-palms washed by the overnight rain and the moving sands softer than silk must have bewitched him. Glimpses of the rugged austerity of Arab life would have flashed through his mind. The blown out fire, the torn ropes of tents, the marks of broken camps would have reminded him of the caravans that had gone past. So enraptured was he by the scenic beauty of this paradise on the earth that he thought of settling down over there. The landscape, the deserts, hills and rivers, the entire atmosphere of the birthplace of the Prophets aroused his slumbering hopes and stimulated

his unrealised dreams, and the intensity of feeling lent sound and music to his undying love for Islam and Muslims. The favourite theme of Islamic revival pushed itself forward and Iqbal went through the same experience as has been related by an Arab poet in these lines of enduring beauty.

"When I dismounted at the place as fresh as the dew and as fragrant as a garden the beauty of the sorroundings awoke certain desires in me and the centre of those desires were you."

Iqbal's poetic fancy was excited. He felt that the old and crumbling world was not fitted to receive his ideas Its thought-patterns had become rigid and conventionalised. Its mind had grown narrow which could only carve the images of country, sex and nationality and offer religious reverence to them and invent excuses for shameful sensuality and self-indulgence. Iqbal prayed for another Abraham to rise and break the new idols.

As the poet looks at the Islamic World he is appalled not only by its material backwardness but also intellectual insolvency. The Arabs have lost the strength of faith and the courage of conviction—their souls have become dead and unresponsive—and the non-Arabs too have got into a groove and become fixed in ideas.

The modern materialistic Age is waiting for a revolutionary man of God who can play the role of the defender of Truth on an international scale and revive the memory of Imam Husain. The Muslim World is looking expectantly at the Arab World, and at Hejaz, the cradle of Islam, to raise the banner of revolt but no hopeful sign is visible.

Iqbal attributes the decline of Muslims to lack of religious zeal and self-esteem. He contends that love should reign supreme in life and the foundations of belief should be fortified with earnestness. Unless the Muslims develop an emotional involvement with Islam it must remain a collection of soulless beliefs and wooden injunctions.

It is love which overcomes the known laws of nature and

makes things possible that are outside the ordinary operation of cause and effect. Sometimes it takes the form of the truthfulness of Khaleel, sometimes of the fortitude of Husain and sometimes of the gallantry of the hero of Badr and Hunain.

Daybreak in the desert, feast for the heart and the eye,
Rivers of light from the fount of sun flowing;
Divine Beauty is on display, rent is the curtain of existence,
A loss for the eye—a thousand gains for the heart;
Purple bits in the air the night's cloud has left,
Mount Izam with a multi-coloured sheet it has covered;
The breeze is pure, leaves of date-palms washed by rain,
Sands of Kazima soft as silk;
Fire is dead, broken the ropes of tents,
Who knows how many caravans have passed along?
Came the voice of Gabriel: "This is the place for you—
For those separated from the beloved it's eternal bliss!"
Poison for me is the wine of life, but who listens?
Old is the congregation of the world, new my ideas are!
On the battleground of life no Ghaznavi is left,
Idols of the people of *Harem* have for long been in wait.
In the ardour of Arab's remembrance, in the music of Iranian's thought,
Observations are not of Arabia nor ideas those of Persia.
Not one Husain in the caravan of Hejaz is found,
Tresses of Tigris and Euphrates though are lustrous still.

Love is the prime mentor of the head and heart,
Without love Faith and Law concepts' idol-hall;
Truthfulness of Khalil is love, fortitude of Husain is love,
In life's unrelenting battle Badr and Hunain are love.

Reverting to the theme of the Perfect Man Iqbal says that his existence is the foremost purpose of creation; he is the secret of *Be and it is*[1], the lost Paradise and the stolen wealth which the soul of the world is trying hard to recover.

Together with it, he is distressed at the moral and spiritual bankruptcy and intellectual inertness of the World of Islam Quest of knowledge, originality of thought, idealism and intentness are absent even from educational institutions and spiritual lodges.

The poet looks around for the flame of life that once imparted light and heat to the world, for the men of faith who have disappeared in the twilight of the past and for the spark that lies buried under the ashes of time.

Iqbal is conscious of the worth and significance of his poetry. He claims that his verses nourish and sustain the hearts as the morning breeze does the grass and shrubs. They carry the message of faith and life because of being soaked in the warm blood of his heart.

Thou art the hidden meaning of the verse of creation,
Parties of hue and scent have gone out in thy search.
Scholars of the seminary visionless and unambitious,
Votaries of the tavern lacking in thirst, short of decanter.
I, in my poem, traces of fire that used to be,
My whole life a quest of the missing ones.

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1. The reference is to the Quranic verse, *But His command, when He intendeth a thing, is only that He saith unto it: Be and it is* (XXXVI : 81)

Nourishment of the thorn and straw in the morning breeze,
By my breath desire is sustained.
My song is fed by the blood of my heart,
In the string of the lyre flows minstrel's blood.
Oh! let there be no peace for the restless heart,
Add a few more curls to thy lustrous hair.

The last part of the poem is devoted to prayer. "Thy radiance surrounds the universe", it reads. "The world is a mere particle of Thy boundless desert and life a drop of the unfathomable sea of Thy Existence. By the touch of Thy Splendour the manifestation of the sun becomes possible in the atom and the presence of the ocean in a drop of water. Lives and deeds of powerful kings and conquerors pale into nothingness before the display of Thy Might and the hearts of whole-souled men and benefactors of humanity are illumined with Thy Sublimity. Thy love is the song-leader of my soul and the interpreter of my heart. Joy and spirituality of my worship is due to it. When my devotions are not blessed with Thy love they become the message of separation, not of union. Both love and intellect have been ordained to seek closeness unto Thee. Study and observation, curiosity and reflection, dignity and self-reliance have been allocated to the mind and ardour and eagerness, disquietude and restlessness, joy and felicity to the heart. Light in the world is not because of the sun but a reflecion of Thy Beauty".

Iqbal admits that long years of study and research could not open for him the door of fulfilment. Knowledge was futile in the same way as it would be foolish to expect the horticulturist to be an expert on the flavour of fresh fruit as well.

The struggle between spirituality and materialism has been going on since the beginning of time and the conflict between truth and falsehood is eternal. The history of Islam, also, is not free from it. Here Iqbal is reminded of the first encounter in

which Abu Jahl[1], Abu Lahab and their deputies operated as standard-bearers of materialism and the sacred Prophet and his Ansars[2] as the upholders of Truth. The task before the Arab and the Islamic World, today, is to make the choice between the two opposing forces.

Thou art the Tablet and the Pen, Thy existence is the Book,
The blue revolving dome a tiny bubble of Thy sea;
The world of water and clay bright by Thy presence,
Thou upon the dust-particle bestowed the dawn of the sun.
Power of Sanjar and Salim a manifestation of Thy Might,
Asceticism of Junaid and Bayazid Thy Beauty uncovered.
Should Thy Love not be the leader of my *Namaz*,
My *Qayam* is mere farce, my *Sujood* only a mask.
Mind and heart—by Thine alluring glance are fulfilled,
One got search and quest, the other unrest and turmoil.
Dark and dingy is the world by the movement of the sun,
Take off Thy veil and revive the drooping spirits of time.
All my past days and nights are known to Thee,
That horticulture was bare of fruit I never knew;
The old battle in my soul has begun again,
Love is all Mustafa, intellect nothing but Bu Lahab.
Sometimes with deception it works, sometimes with force,
Strange is the beginning of Love, strange is its end!

1. An inveterate enemy of the Prophet.
2. Helpers.

In the world of strife and revolt separation is better than union,
In union the death of desire, in separation the joy of longing.
At the time of union I dared not cast a glance,
In search of a pretext though my insolent eyes were.
Separation is the heat of desire, separation is the tumult of groan,
Separation is the quest of tide, separation is the glory of the drop.

The poem, *Zauq-o-Shauq*. (Ardour and Eagerness), ranks among the masterpieces of Iqbal. In form and substance it is very much like the *Masjid-i-Qartaba*. To begin with, it contains an enchanting depiction of natural beauty and the plain yet refreshing mode of living of the Arabs. As the poem progresses Iqbal touches on most of the themes that are characteristic to his poetry and philosophy, such as, struggle and endeavour, fervour and earnestness, love and intellect, separation and union, beauty and power and Divine Glory and Sublimity. With a phenomenal keenness of perception and maturity of thought he enters into the soul of countries and communities and through a rare combination of poetical fluency and intellectual penetration he analyses their distinguishing traits and capacity for good and evil. He not only knows the West intimately but is also acquainted with the inner urges and latent powers of the Orient—Arabia, Iran and Afghanistan. Apart from describing the scenic beauty of Palestine, Iqbal has woven into it the simple experiences of every-day life like the blown out fire and the broken ropes of tents with such delicate sensitiveness that it does not fail to exercise a moving effect on the reader.

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14

PROBLEM OF PALESTINE

Iqbal was intensely interested in the problem of Palestine and the deep anxiety he felt for the future of the Arabs never left him in life. We can obtain an idea of the uneasiness of his mind from his letters, specially those written to Miss Farquherson.

To Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah he once wrote, "The question of Palestine is agitating the minds of Indian Muslims. It may be possible for the Muslim League to render some service to the Palestinian Arabs. Personally, I am prepared to court imprisonment for a cause which concerns both India and the Muslims. The establishment of a Western outpost at the gateway of Asia can be dangerous for Islam as well as India[1]."

Similarly, in a letter to Miss Farquherson he says, "The Jews have no claim over Palestine. They had voluntarily left it long before the occupation by the Arabs. Zionism is not a religious movement. Besides the fact that religious-minded Jews are not interested in it, the Palestine Report, itself, is clear on the point[2]."

In one way or the other, Iqbal was associated with all the conferences that were held in India in its connection. He issued a forceful statement when the Muslims of Lahore met to protest

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1. *Iqbal Nama*, p. 27
2. Ibid., p. 446

against the Palestine Report which read, "I am as much distressed at the injustice done to the Arabs as any one can be who is in touch with the situation in the Middle East. The problem gives an opportunity to the Muslims to declare unequivocally that what the British statesmen are trying to solve does not concern Palestine alone but will have wide repercussions in the entire Islamic World. Historically, Palestine is wholly a Muslim problem. The Jewish problem had ceased to exist in Palestine thirteen hundred years ago, before the entry of Hazrat Omar into Jerusalem. The Jews were never forcibly expelled from it. According to Prof. Hocking they had themselves freely decided to migrate to other lands and a major portion of their Scriptures was compiled outside Palestine. It was never a Christian problem also. Modern historical researches have cast a doubt even on the existence of Peter the Hermit[1]."

At the termination of World War I the wrath of the victorious Allied Powers fell upon the Islamic World. The Ottoman Empire broke into fragments and the Allies set about dividing it among themselves. The eastern part of Turkey was annexed by Russia and the Western provinces like Hungary, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Albania were made independent. Iran and Syria were taken over by France as Protectorates while Iraq and Egypt passed into the hands of the British. Palestine had an international significance and so its trusteeship was assumed by Britain. Iqbal throws light on these despicable deals and exposes the old game of the Western Imperialists who devour the weaker nations and then show hypocritical grief over their misfortune.

Blessed be thy kind heart that for Divine Recompense,
Thou attended the funeral service of thy own victim.

The West calls it 'white man's burden', trusteeship and progress but, in truth, it is pure exploitation.

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1. *Iqbal Nama*, p. 452.

Iqbal does not doubt Europe's nobility,
Of every oppressed nation she is the buyer;
But my heart burns for Syria, Palestine,
And this hard riddle of fate none can lay bare;
Freed from Turkey's 'savage grasp', they pine,
Poor wretches ! now in civilisation's snare.

The League of Nations had done little to mitigate the sufferings of the Arabs and Asians. It had failed to bring about an improvement primarily because that august body was dominated by the Jews and the Western nations who lost no opportunity to use it for their selfish ends. Iqbal roundly condemns it as the "kept woman of the Old Man of Europe" and the "association of shroud-lifters".

An association thy have formed for the division of graves.

Iqbal foresees the consequences of the growing influence of the Jews in the political and economic life of the West and fears that sooner or later it will definitely succumb to their machinations.

Jewish usurors have for long been in wait,
Before whose cunning lion's strength is not anything.
Like ripened fruit the West is going to fall,
Let's see in whose lap it drops.

In another poem, *Europe Aur Yuhud* (Europe and the Jews), he expresses the same sentiment.

Sick before its prime, this Civilisation is at its last grasp,
And the sole trustees of Christendom Jews are likely to be.

After the Arab-Israel War of June 1967 it is being openly contended by the Jews and their supporters that since they were unjustly expelled from their homeland by the Arabs no one could blame them for trying to reoccupy it by force. Palestine was the Promised Land to which the Jews were bound to return one day or the other.

Iqbal laid bare the absurdity of it by pointing out that the Jews had moved out of Patestine willingly and out of their own accord long before the Arab occupation. Moreover, he argued that if the principle advanced by the Jews and their Western patrons was accepted and Palestine was handed over to the Zionists what could prevent the Arabs from laying claim to Sicily, Spain and the other European lands that were once in their possession? Or, could, by the same logic, the Red Indians not assert their right over America and the Huns, Goths and Gauls over Britain and the Aryans of India not demand that Iran and Russia should be returned to them? It was a ridiculous distortion of history in the estimation of Iqbal who maintained that if the Jews must be provided with a home it should be in Germany from where they had been banished.

If the Jew claims the soil of Palestine,
Why has the Arab race no right to Spain?
The aim of British Imperialism is different,
It is not a matter of history, honey or dates.

Iqbal wants to arm the Palestinian Arabs with the weapons of faith and Self-awareness. He is convinced that it is only through reliance upon God and upon themselves that they can regain freedom. International forums will avail them nothing.

I know that in your being burns the fire,
Whose heat to this day the world remembers;
Your balm lies not in London nor Geneva,
The Jewish grasp is tight on Europe's throat.
But nations throw off bondage, it is told,
By cultivating Selfhood and zest for living.

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15

IN AFGHANISTAN

Iqbal went to Afghanistan, in 1933, at the invitation of King Nadir Shah. He also visited Ghazni, the capital of Mahmud Ghaznavi, and presented himself at the tomb of Sunai[1] the philosopher, whom he regarded as his mentor, next only to Maulana Rum. It proved to be a unique experience and the verses he wrote there are richly illustrative of his exceptional artistic and intellectual ability. In them he has directed his attention at the contemporary world as a creator of values and a judge of his environment.

Iqbal expresses pain and discontent at the "langour and tardiness of the fellow-travellers" and at the "narrowness and triviality of the world" which has turned out to be a "strait-jacket" for his high-soaring ideas. He does not find even the hills and valleys, forests and deserts fit enough to harbour the wild stirrings of his heart and says that the whole system of extant material objects and the space in which these exist must appear too short and narrow to any one whom God has blessed with Vision and Love. Men of God, the enlightened souls, as such, feel compelled to cut themselves free from the material world and seek new horizons. Iqbal calls it the "secret of

1. A famous poet during the time of Mahmud Ghaznavi. He started with lyrical poetry and rose to be the court poet of the Sultan. But when awakening came to him he retired from the world and began to write only mystical and philosophical poems.

Tawheed[1]" which opens the door of God awareness to His earnest, deep-hearted slaves and they begin to see the glimpses of the other world in their earthly existence.

The vastness of Nature cannot harbour the wild stirrings,
Oh my madness! Wrong, perhaps, was thy estimate of the wilderness,
The strong Self can burst through the enchantments of sense,
Tawheed[1] it was which neither you nor I could know."

The traditional rivalry between *Tariqat* (Mysticism) and *Shariat* (Strict observance of the Divine Law) is more imaginary than real. There is no contradiction between knowledge and intuition and faith and love. It is only the false reasoning and scholastic conceit of the claimants to *Shariat* and *Haqiqat* (Reality) that makes them look upon love and awareness with suspicion. Iqbal also contends that the real thing for the devotees of *Shariat* and *Haqiqat* is supreme indifference to the rewards the world has to offer. This is their glory and they can take shelter only in the fortress of contentment after turning their backs upon the people of wealth and renown. As he is reminded of the noble asceticism of the votaries of the heart and of the glowing feats of endurance and heroism they used to perform he feels like reproaching even Archangel Gabriel and observing that in love and submission even the holy spirits cannot emulate the example of man.

Rivalry between Reason and Vision is the fallacy of the pulpit,
Which regards the scaffold of Hallaj[2] its permanent foe.

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1. The doctrine that there is only One God.
2. Literally means the carder of cotton. Here it signifies Mansur who was put to death for believing in the identity of the individual soul with the Divine spirit and raising the cry of *God Is I!*

If there is any shield to guard the pure ones of the Lord,
In thraldom or dominion, it is the scorn of this world's show.
Try not, Oh Gabriel, to emulate my passion and ecstacy,
For ease-loving angles *Zikr*[1], *Tasbeeh*[2] and *Tawaf*[3] are best.

The poet is critical of both the East and the West as he returns to his own times. He examines them closely, studies their merits and faults, analyses their problems and difficulties and comes to the conclusion that the East is not lacking in potentialities but its problem is that proper guidance and leadership is not available to it while the West is intoxicated with power and overfullness and excessive indulgence in material pleasures has produced a state of ennui in it. He summons up the memory of the great men of the East who had challenged the might of Chosroes and before whose supreme contentment powerful kings and potentates took fright. The very existence of these marvellous specimens of humanity was the symbol of the triumph of truth over falseshood. Iqbal is saddened at the pitiful state of the Arab World and his sense of pride is stirred as he witnesses the treachery, ineptitude and debauchery of its rulers. He laments that these dishonourable men can even sell away the blanket of Abu Zar, the habit of Owais and the mantle of Zahra and allow the holy places of Islam to be desecrated by non-Muslims.

He compares the present plight of the Arab countries and the growing influence of the West in them with the convulsion of the Day of Judgement and recites the verse Sunai wrote at

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1. Repeating the names, praises and attributes of God.
2. Telling one's beads.
3. Circumambulation.

the time of Tartar invasion bewailing that while the Chinese and Turkish hordes had advanced upto the House of Ka'aba the people of the *Harem* were fast asleep.

> I have seen many a wineshop of the East and West,
> Here no Saqi fills the cup, there in the wine no lambent glow,
> In Iran they are no more, nor in Turan,
> Bondsmen whose contentment was the death of Shah and Caesar.
> Hucksters rule the *Harem* who sell for profit,
> The blanket of Abu Zar, habit of Owais and Zahra's mantle.
> Before the Lord Raphael against me complained,
> 'This rash creature may not bring the Day of Wrath before its hour!
> 'Is it less terrible', came the Voice, 'than Judgement Day, that while
> The Chinese have donned the pilgrim's robe, the Meccan is asleep in Batha[1]?'

Iqbal analyses the characteristics of the Western Civilisation and arrives at the opinion that poise and stability cannot be produced in life without the rejection of false and perverted values and the adoption of pure and healthful ideals. This, precisely, is what *La Ilah-a-Illallah* stands for. The first part of it consists of the total negation of fictitious deities and absolute repudiation of the heresy of materialism and the second of the implicit affirmation of faith in the Almighty, the Glorious One. The tragedy of the West is that it quickly fulfilled the first part of the Confession, challenged the overlordship of the Church in the Middle Ages and put an end to the tyranny of the Pope but where the other part was concerned it was a total failure. Human society cannot thrive only on negative virtues. Europe

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1. The name of the Valley of Mecca.

which had established its sway over the world through knowledge, discipline and force came to grief in the real sphere of life. It was bankrupt from within, possessing neither a living faith nor noble ideals nor healthy objectives. In the upshot, it went astray and took to folly and error.

Iqbal's cheerful hopefulness does not permit him to lose faith in the future of the East. He is a firm believer in its revival and resuscitation. In the present poem he says that the East is full of latent power and promise of development and expresses the hope that from the 'motionless sea' will rise a powerful tidal wave that will sink the boat of corruption and injustice. He protests against the designs of the Western Imperialists who have made the East the main target of their conspiracies and enslaved its mind and spirit. The Easterner has drifted away from his mental and spiritual moorings and become a person of no importance in the world. Slavery makes a man blind and distorts his judgement. Only the understanding and power of discrimination of free and self-respecting people is reliable. He alone takes the lead and casts his shadow on coming events who can see the image of tomorrow in today's mirror.

> Modern Civilisation is filled to the brim with the wine of *No and No*,
> But the goblet of *Affirmation* the Saqi does not hold;
> The dexterous fiddler's chords have kept it subdued,
> In the lowest string murmurs the wail of Europe's woe;
> From the self-same flood which breeds the crocodile,
> Rises the savage wave that destroys its lurking place below.
> And what is slavery ? Exile from the love of grace and beauty,
> Nothing is ever lovely but if freemen call it so ;
> In the bondsman's sight we never put our trust,
> The sight of the freeborn alone is dependable in the world ;

The master of Today is he who by his own resolve,
Has fished Tomorrow's pearl from the deep ocean of Time.

The crafty glass-blower of the West has softened up even proud and sturdy souls by popularising among them the cult of delicacy and refinement. The deceitful craftsman has melted the rock. But Iqbal claims that he possesses the elixir which changes base metal into gold and imparts to the glass the firmness of granite. He has overcome the arrogance of many an oppressor with the 'luminous hand' of faith and contentment. How can his flame which is intended to destroy the odds and ends of falsehood be suppressed with rubbish and garbage? Love teaches man to be self-respecting and makes him averse to worldliness and fortune hunting. Iqbal, now, warms up and the undying love for the Prophet and faith in the eternity of his message inspires him to rise to the dizzy heights of ecstasy. He proclaims that no one should wonder if the planets become his stepping-stones for he has tied the string of his life to the saddle-strap of the blessed Prophet whose star never loses its radiance, who is the fountain-head of knowledge and awareness and the sheet anchor of leadership and guidance, and by the touch of whose feet the dust of the road begins to give out the light of the Valley of Sinai.[1]

The glass-blowers of Firangistan[2] can make stone melt and flow,
But glass bathed in my elixir becomes as hard as flint.
Though Pharaohs plotted, and yet plot against me what harm?
In my sleeve I possess the luminous hand of Moses.

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1. Where Moses witnessed the effects of the Divine epiphany.
2. Europe.

This spark how can it be subdued by earth's rubbish heaps,
Hath God not created it to burn bare whole deserts?
Love is self-beholding, Love the self-sustaining thing,
Love stands unconcerned at the gates of Caesar and Chosroes.
What wonder if the Plaedias or the high moon fall my prey,
For I have bound my head to the Prophet's saddle-bow!
The Path-finder, Last Messenger of God, Master of all,
Who on the road-dust bestowed the splendour of Sinai.
In the high-wrought eye of Love He is the first and the last,
— The Book, the Word, the Chapter and the Verse.
Out of respect for Sunai I did not go pearl-diving, or else
Countless gems still cluster in this deep, bottomless sea.

16

PRAYER OF TARIQ

When the young and stout-hearted Muslim General, Tariq bin Ziad, landed with his Arab soldiers on the coast of Spain he ordered the vessels in which they had crossed the Mediterranean to be burnt so that there remained no possibility of a retreat. After the command had been carried out he addressed his troops in these memorable words, "There is now no escape. The sea is behind you and the enemy is in front. By God! You have nothing to depend upon except your own courage and fortitude." The enthusiasm of the soldiers knew no bounds as they heard the rousing oration and their trust in God and in the strength of their own arms became complete.

Tariq realised, after he had drawn his troops for battle, that the Spaniards were far superior to them in numbers and equipment and being cut-off from home by hundreds of miles he could also not hope for reinforcements. His only hope lay in capturing the arms of the enemy otherwise the prospects were very dark. Tariq was worried and, in the desperateness of his situation, he could think of no other recourse than to seek Divine help by building up the spiritual stamina of his men. He placed his reliance on the help of God and took it for granted that it was with him for he was sure of the justice of his cause. He knew in his heart that his army was the 'party of Allah' which had not embarked upon the expedition for conquest or worldly glory but solely for the victory of His Word

and the defence and advocacy of His Faith. They had come out with their 'heads on their palms' to lead mankind from darkness to light and to deliver it from the overlordship of fellow-men to the overlordship of Allah, the Supreme Being, from the narrow confines of this world to the boundlessness of the Hereafter and from the tyranny and oppression of other religions to the fairness and justice of Islam ; and had the Lord of Lords, the Creator of all things, not promised victory to His bondmen who took up arms in the fulfilment of the sublime mission ? *And that Our host, they verily would be the victors.*[1]

The Arab General, at that fateful hour, turned meekly to God and beseeched Him earnestly for help. He was following the example of the sacred Prophet who had led the first Muslim army and, after marshalling his troops on the battle-field of Badr, withdrawn to a quiet corner, placed his forehead on the ground and cried out for Divine help. "O God !" he had said. "If these men are killed today Thou shalt not be worshipped in the world."

Thus, Tariq, following in the steps of his leader and master made a prayer which military commanders seldom make. They just never think of it. Iqbal has heightened the beauty of it by adorning it with the robe of poetry. His poem, *Tariq ki Du*ʿ*a* (The Prayer of Tariq), reads : "O Lord ! These bondsmen have set out in Thy path for *Jehad*. They are the seekers of Thy Good Pleasure. They are mysterious as well as the keepers of mystery. Their true state and position is known only to Thee. Thou hast taught them highmindedness and, now, they will not settle for less than world-leadership and Divine rule. These proud men listen or yield to no one save Thee. Deserts and rivers carry out their biddings and mountains turn into heaps of dust out of fear and respect for them. Thou hast made them indifferent to the riches of the worlds by instilling Thy love into

1. Al-Quran : XXXVII, 173.

their hearts. But for the love of *Jehad* and the joy of martyrdom the kingdom of the earth holds no attraction for them. This is the magic of love. It is the ruling passion that has brought them to this remote land. It is the last wish and the greatest desire of a Muslim.

"The world is hovering on the verge of ruin. Only the Arabs, by laying down their lives, can save it from falling into the abyss of destruction. Everyone is thristing for Arab blood and this sacred blood alone can remove the malady. Forests and gardens, tulips and roses are pining for it to colour their cheeks. We have come to this strange country to irrigate it with our life-blood so that the withered crop of humanity may flourish again and springtime may return after the agonising spell of autumn."

The *Ghazis*, these mysterious bondsmen of Thine,
To whom Thou hast granted zest for Divinity.
Deserts and oceans fold up at their kick,
And mountains shrink into mustard seeds.
Indifferent to the riches of the world it makes,
What a curious thing is the joy of love ?
Martyrdom is the desired end of the *Momin*,
Not spoils of war, kingdom and rule !
For long has tulip in the garden been waiting,
It needs a robe dipped in Arab blood.

"O Lord ! Thou hast conferred Thy unique favours on these desert-dwellers and herders of camels. Thou vouchsafed them a new knowledge, a new faith and a new way of life. Thou gave them the wealth of *Azan* which is the standing call of *Tawheed*, arousing men from the slumber of ignorance. By means of it the Arabs put an end to the death-like stupor that had descended upon the world and gave it the glad tidings of a new dayspring. Life had lost its warmth and movement and centuries had passed over it in that state. It regained its momentum, started again on its journey and attained the

destination of faith and love. The crusaders do not regard death to be the end of life but the threshold of a new existence.

"O God ! Grant them the dignity of faith and enmity for Thy own sake (as was revealed in the prayer of Noah : *My Lord ! Leave not one of the disbelievers in the land*[1]) so that this army may become a relentless sword and a fearful thunderbolt for heathenism and corruption and produce fear for it in the heart of the enemy."

Thou made the desert-dwellers absolutely unique,
In thought, in perception, in the morning *Azan* ;
What, for centuries, life had been seeking,
It found the warmth in the hears of these men;
Death is the opener of the heart's door,
It's not the journey's end in their sight.
Revive, once again, in the heart of the *Momin*,
The lightning that was in the prayer of *Leave Not*[2].
Wake up ambition in the breasts, O Lord ;
Transform the glance of the *Momin* into a sword.

The prayer of the death-defying soldier was granted and the Arabs gained a magnificent victory. The Christian Spain became Islamic Andalusia and a strong Muslim kingdom was established that lasted for eight hundred years. Its dawnfall came only when the spirit of Tariq and his valiant companions had died out among the Moors and the high purpose that had brought them there was forgotten. The extinction of religious fervour and free-living and internecine strife not only led to the termination of Muslim rule in Spain but also imperilled the very existence of the followers of Islam in that country till not one of them was left. Such has been the way of God with those that are negligent and ungrateful since the beginning of time.

Thou will not find for Our method aught of power to change[3].

1. Al-Quran : LXXI, 26
2. Allusion is to the prayer of Noah reproduced earlier.
3. Al-Quran : XVII, 77

17

TO THE SAQI

Iqbal's *Saqi Nama* (To the Saqi) is universally held to be one of his more important poems. Besides being remarkable for the depth of meaning, from the literary and technical point of view also, it is a unique work of its kind in the whole range of Urdu literature. It is, perhaps, the first *Saqi Nama* in Urdu in which the experiment of offering philosophy in the fashion of poetry has been made. In Persian, too, the *Saqi Namas* of Zahuri and others are very limited in their scope. The excellence of Iqbal's art lies in his ability to transform into a thing of enduring beauty whatever from of verse he touches. His passionate eloquence imparts to the poems, whether lyrical, philosophical or metaphysical, a richness of effect which is most noticeable in spite of the simplicity of language. We find him laying down a new tradition in poetical expression no matter to what branch of verse-making he turns his attention.

In Persian and Urdu the *Mathnawis*[1] of Nasim and Mir Hasan, as also of other poets practising their skill in the line, are wholly of a descriptive natue. These poems are good so far as narration of events is concerned but for sustaining the grace and energy of their flight the writers of these long verses had

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1. A *Mathnawi* is a sort of long poem in which the couplets rhyme regularly, as one finds in English heroic verse.

to intersperse them with *Ghazals*. On the other hand, Iqbal has maintained the emotional fervour of *Qasida* and *Ghazal* in *Mathnawi* as well, and, thus, saved it from falling into dullness and monotony. Throughout, the style is elevated—vigorous yet musical, clear yet suggestive.

In the opening part of the *Saqi Nama* Iqbal describes the advent of spring but he uses the subjective treatment of Nature as a background to his poetry. He says that the spring has come, its heralds have spread over hills and dales, and tulips and roses, briars and basils have established their sway; the springtime has breathed life and vitality even into rocks, and clouds of bliss have enveloped the earth. In this delightful environment birds have come out of their nests and brooks and rivers, gushing forth from the mountains, are moving forward majestically in the plains like life itself, turning and twisting, halting and advancing, jumping and crawling, overcoming obstacles and circumventing obstructions.

Iqbal beautifully utilises the spiritual significance of Nature to convey his philosophy of life in the allegory of a mountain-stream. Just as the stream advances steadily in spite of obstructions, continually changing direction but never losing liveliness and energy, so should man develop his personality by surmounting the impediments in his way and refusing to yield and surrender.

Spring's caravan has pitched its tents;
The mountain's skirts into paradise have turned.
Rose, lily, narcissus, daffodil; the poppy,
The eternal martyr, in blood-stained shroud.
Behind the veil of colour earth has hidden,
Even in the veins of stone blood is flowing.
Blue is the sky; the air intoxicating,
No feathered biped will stay in its nest.
And look that mountain-stream leaping,
Rebounding, slipping, gushing, stumbling,

Jumping, swaying, crawling, recovering,
Winding its way in spite of curve and bend ;
Forces its way through the boulder when it stops,
It pierces the hearts of mountain rocks.
Oh Saqi ! vermilion-cheeked—see !
Life's message how the brook conveys.
Pour me the fiery, veil-burning wine,
Not every day the springtime comes !
The wine by which life's soul is illumined,
Which sustains the universe, keeps it alive,
Holds the strife and tumult of eternity,
The wine by which eternal secret is revealed ;
Oh Saqi ! Raise that mystery's curtain !
Let the wagtail challenge falcon's wing !

The times have changed ; the hidden motives of the West have been exposed and its conspiracies against the East laid bare. The revolution that has taken place in the minds of men has unnerved the Western leaders. The sterility of Western politics and the absurdity of its outdated traditions have come to light and concepts like those of Imperialism and Colonialism are being openly challenged. The Age of Capitalism is nearing its end and curtain has been rung on the drama the exploiters of the West had been staging for centuries. The slumbering masses are beginning to show signs of wakefulness, the springs of life are, again, gushing out from the Himalayas and the light of Sinai is eager to make itself manifest once more.

Though the Muslim is wedded to the creed of Monotheism apostasy is still dogging his path and his learning and culture and philosophy and mysticism are not secure against the inroads of pantheistic doctrines. Reality is being eroded by superstition and the *Millet* has yet far to go to shake off the spell of fantasy and folklore. Preachers and orators weave magic-patterns of ideas from the pulpit but they are lacking in sincerity and earnestness. Their sermons conform to the standards of

eloquence and scholarship but fail to reach the hearts. The *Sufi* who was known for human sympathy, quest for truth and religious lofty-mindedness has got lost in mystic visions and trances, and, on the whole, Islam has come so close to decline that the Muslim's inner fire has turned into ashes and his life has become synonymous with death.

The fashions of the Age have turned round,
The tune is new, the orchestra has changed ;
The wiles of the Frank have been laid bare,
The Frankish glass-blower is bewildered, confused ;
Old state-craft is a cause of shame,
Of king and sovereign the earth is sick ;
The day of Capitalism is done,
The juggler has shown his tricks and gone.
The Chinese, long sunk in stupor, are waking up,
Himalayan streams, again, are gushing forth ;
The hearts of Sinai and Faran lie pierced,
To fill his eyes with light Moses is keen.
But the Muslim, strident in the affirmation of *Tawheed*,
Still wears the sacred thread in his heart ;
His art, law, logic and theology,
Worshippers all of the idols of *Ajam* ;
Truth in jargon has been lost,
The *Ummat*[1] caught in ritual maze ;
The preacher's phrase may delight the ear,
But of love's fervour it is completely bare,
Well set in logic his sermon is,
And bedecked with the intricacies of idiom.
The *Sufi*, God's servant once,
Peerless in love, unmatched in honour,
In the ideas of *Ajam* has forgotten himself,
This traveller has got lost in the Stages of the Soul.

1. Meaning the Muslim community.

Love's fire is dead, darkness abounds,
A Muslim? No; a heap of ashes is he!

Iqbal implores God to revive the spirit of faith among the Muslims and restore to them the glory of the bygone days. He begs Him to rekindle the flame of love so that they can attain to heights that are outside the reach of heavy-footed materialists. He prays for the pulsation of the heart of Ali and the singleness of purpose of Abu Bakr to be granted once again to the Muslim *Millet* and also the 'warmth of eagerness' which is the distinctive attribute of living nations. "O Lord!" he entreats, "Thy earth and Thy heavens are real and Thy Power is eternal. Share its secret with the Muslim youth also and produce in its heart the tumult of life. On the Muslim young men bestow some of my love, anxiety and insight, pull my boat out of the storm and guide it safely to the shore. Reveal to me the mystery of life and death. Thou, indeed, art the Knower, the Well-Informed.

"O God! Thou hast made my nature a mirror in which the spirit of the times is reflected and the image of Divine inspiration is drawn. In my heart the battle between good and evil, belief and disbelief, faith and skepticism is perpetually waging. These are my riches and I implore Thee to distribute this pitiful fortune, these beggar's chattels, to the youth of Islam which alone is the rightful heir to them."

Pour again the vintage wine, Oh Saqi,
Let the same cup rotate!
Lend me love's wings to soar on,
Like a glow-worm cause my dust to fly!
Release intellect from slavery's bonds,
Make youth instructor to old age.
Your moisture keeps green the *Millet's* bough,
From thy breath it draws its life.
Endow our hearts with the power to throb,
With Ali's passion and Siddiq's warmth!

Pierce our souls with that same arrow,
In our breasts awaken desire !
Hail, stars of Thy heavens ; and hail to those,
Who on earth devote their nights to prayer !
Bestow on the youth the warmth of my heart,
My love and my vision !
Through whirlpools bring safe my boat,
Stationary it has become, set it afloat.
Teach me the secret of death and life,
You in whose sight infinite regions are !
Wakefulness of my tearful eyes ;
The anguish concealed in my heart,
The torment of my midnight wail,
Poignancy of my loneliness in company,
My longings and my desires,
My hopes and my quests ;
My nature, the mirror which reflects the world,
The pasture where thoughts like gazelles wander ;
My heart, life's battleground, in which
Armies of doubt set upon faith's steadfastness.
These the world-scorners wealth, by which
Oh Saqi ! even in poverty I am rich ;
That wealth bestow on my caravan,
Bestow—for there its place belongs.

Iqbal then expounds his philosophy of existence and calls attention to the force, changeability and fundamental unity of life.

Each moment flows the ocean of life,
From all things is manifest the rush of life.
Peace and permanence a mere illusion,
Each atom throbs, pulsates with life.
Caravan of existence never makes a halt,
Every moment the glory of creation is renewed.
Thinkest thou that life is a riddle ?
Nothing but the passion of flight it is !

Means of sustenance to it is travel,
Movement is truth, halting a delusion.

Lastly, the poet warns the Muslim youth, succumbing as it is to wordly temptations, that sustenance which clips the wings and robs man of his pride is worst than poison. What makes wealth desirable is that it enables one to live with honour otherwise there is little virtue in being rich. Iqbal tries to impress upon the minds of Muslim young men the importance of living with a due regard of one's character and reputation. He reveals to them the mysteries of love's genuflexion which makes a man indifferent to all other acts of devotion and prostration and releases him from every other form of bondage. He instils into them the love of adventure and urges them on to forge ahead and discover new worlds that lie beyond the imagination of the scientists. Iqbal insists that the transitory world of matter, with all its charms and inducements, is only the first and, by no means, the last stage in the journey of those that are self-knowing. The restless soul of man has not been created for the wretched earth. It is not man's real abode, his cherished goal. He can be the fountainhead of the universe but the universe cannot be his origin. A Muslim is nothing if he is not fearless. He should always be moving forward, providing himself with the wherewithal of the journey and demolishing the roadblocks of materialism that beset his path. Iqbal wants him to surmount the barriers of time and space because when the *Momin* realises himself the earth and the heavens become his captive. He begins to rule over the universe. The material world is not the be-all and end-all of creation. There are many other worlds, unknown and undiscovered. The process of creaton is a continuing one. It has not come to an end. "The world is waiting for you to take lead", says he to the Muslims. "It is a continually growing world, bursting and burgeoning at every instant. It is a free, dynamic process, not a static existence. It expands itself in proportion to the frontiers of your thought and endeavour.

The vicissitudes of time are meant to give you an opportunity to discover yourself. You are the conqueror, the subjugator of whatever there is between the heavens and the earth. The angles aspire for the heights which belong to you but you are such a high-soaring bird that they can not challenge comparison with you."

What is that breath's tide but a sword ?
And what is Ego but that sword's keen edge ?
Ego is life's innermost secret,
The wakefulness of the universe,
Drunk with glory, enamoured of solitude,
All an ocean mewed in a drop of water,
Eternity before it, eternity behind,
No frontiers stand before it, nor at its back.
The bread that takes away Ego's lustre,
For him who guards his Selfhood is poison,
Honourable alone is the bread for him,
Which keeps the head held high.
Your flame is not from this dust-heap,
You are not from the earth, but the earth from you,
Other worlds exist, unknown, unseen,
The essence of existence is not yet void.
The sum and end of Time's revolution,
That you should come to know yourself

18

LAMENTATION OF ABU JAHL

In the world of fantasy Amr bin Hisham (popularly known as Abu Jahl[1]), one of the stoutest defenders of Ignorance and most zealous standard-bearers of Arab nationalism, makes a pilgrimage to Mecca which has now become the nerve-centre of faith, the citadel of Apostleship and the cradle of Monotheism. What he sees there in the *Harem* are not the idols of Lat and Manat but earnest devotees of the Lord performing the circumambulation, celebrating the service and keeping their nights alive with prayer and supplication. An unending picture of *Ruku*[2] and *Sujood*[3], *Tasbih*[4] and *Tahlil*[5], *Tahmid*[6] and *Tamjid*[7] and *Zikr*[8] and *Istighfar*[9] meets his eye. There are neither the idols of Materialism nor the images of Ignorance. Instead of glorifying *Habal*,[10] *Uza*,[11] *Usaf*[12] and *Naila*[13] from its lofty minarets, the

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1. The name of an uncle of the Prophet who was one of his most stubborn enemies. He was killed in the battle of Badr in A.D., 623.
2. Bowing low.
3. Prostration.
4. Act of praising God.
5. Acknowledging the true God.
6. Hymning.
7. Glorification.
8. Recital of the names, praises and attributes of God.
9. Repentance.

10, 11, 12 and 13. Ancient idols of Arabia.

Muezzin[1] proclaims the Oneness of God and the Apostleship of Prophet Mohammad. Human equality and Islamic fraternity have taken the place of Pagan pride and tribal vanity. People now regard mankind to be a single family in which the Arabs and the non-Arabs are one and equal. If there is any criterion of superiority it is piety and moral excellence.

Abu Jahl listens attentively to the conversation of the Arabs but not a word of vainglory, personal, tribal or racial, is spoken. He moves among the people and is shocked to find that no one looks down upon the other by reason of his origin or occupation. On the other hand, men are flocking round a black-skinned slave to receive instruction from him and taking pride in being his pupils. Abu Jahl tries his best to discover in their religious beliefs and moral and social behaviour some trace of Paganism or a remnant of the era of Ignorance but is sorely disappointed. Ultimately the realisation is forced upon him that the marks of the past life have been completely obliterated and a new society based upon ethical and spiritual values has come up. The patterns of conduct, the standards of virtue and the criteria of right and wrong have changed and a revolution has taken place both in inner and outer existence of the Arabs. Abu Jahl feels deeply hurt at the radical turn of events and in his despair recites the following verse.

No more the people that I knew,
No longer the houses I frequented !

The chief of the tribe of Makhzum[2] has become a foreigner in his own country, a stranger in his own home. He cannot recognise his old Mecca of which he was once a respectable citizen. How tremendously has it altered ! He wistfully remembers the House of Kaᶜaba, the *Hateem*[3], the Black Stone,

1. Public crier to prayer.
2. Makhzun was the name of Abu Jahl's tribe and he was its leader.
3. *Hateem* is the name of that portion of land in the north of Kaᶜaba which was left out when Kaᶜaba was rebuilt.

the Well of Zam Zam and the assembly of the Quraish leaders in which they used to torment the Muslims. Has he lost his way and come to some other place ?

He is haunted by the memory of the days of old when he considered the new faith of Mohammad (Peace be upon whom) a threat to Arab nationalism and to the hegemony of the Quraish and held the Islamic way of life to be a challenge to Pagan customs and practices.

Abu Jahl believed that honour and superiority were the monopoly of the Arabs while all other peoples were mean and barbaric. He had foreseen the revolutionary consequences of Islam and knew that if it came out triumphant it would be the end of all he held dear. He was, thus, in the forefront in the defense of Paganism.

As Abu Jahl is lost in these thoughts his Pagan vanity asserts itself. He hugs the walls of Kaʿaba and complains against the sacred Prophet. "My heart is bleeding and my soul is wounded", he says. "Mohammad has put out the lamp of Kaʿaba and brought its honour to dust. He has razed the palaces of Caesar and Chosroes, kings and emperors, to the ground and done away with the old order by declaring : *Lo ! The earth is Allah's. He giveth it for an inheritance to whom He will.*[1] He has cast a spell over our younger generations so that they have turned against us and become the ardent admirers of his faith and personality. Can there be a greater blasphemy than *La Ilaha Illallah* upon the recitation of which all the deities except One God mentioned in history become false and fictitious ? He has erased the name of the ancient faith and flung to the winds the glory of Lat and Manat. How I wish the world took vengeance upon him ! Isn't it strange that he rejects the visible deities but has sacrificed all that he had for the invisible one ? He proclaims the faith in the manifest to be inferior to faith in

1. Al-Quran : VII : 128.

the unseen. How can one believe in something that is not present or can not be seen ? Is it not the height of bigotry and self-delusion to prostrate oneself before the imperceptible ? Can prostration before the unseen ever be as satisfying as before the solid images of stone ?"

My breast is riven and anguished by this Mohammad,
His breath has put out the burning lamp of the Kaʿaba ;
He has sung of the destruction of Caesar and Chosroes,
He has stolen away from us our young men ;
He is a magician, and magic is in his speech,
These two words *La Ilah* are very unbelief.
So he has rolled up the carpet of our father's faith,
And has done with our lord gods what he has done.
By his blow lie scattered Lat and Manat,
Take vengeance upon him, you wide world ;
He bound his heart to the invisible, broke with the visible,
His incantation has destroyed the present image.
It is wrong to fix one's eye on the invisible,
That which not comes into sight, wherever is it ?
It is blindness to make prostration to the invisible,
The new religion is blindness, blindness is remoteness.
To kneel and bend low before an undimensioned God,
Such prayers bring no joy to the worshipper.

Abu Jahl laments that "the religion of Mohammad has sounded the death-knell of nationalism. He belongs to the noble tribe of the Quraish and yet shows respect to the slaves and treats the rich and the poor, the Arab and the non-Arab, alike. He even dines with his own slave. Alas ! He did not realise the worth of the Arabs and made the Persian rustics and black-skinned slaves their equals. He has brought shame on the Arab race. I know that he has borrowed the concept of

equality from Iran and fallen to the deception of Persians like Salman. His imaginative mind has brought untold misery on the Arabs. This Hashimite young man has himself put an end to his nobility and his *Namaz* has made a simpleton of him. Can the pedigree of a Persian compare with ours ? Can he ever talk in the bedouin accent or cultivate the *Mudhiran*[1] manner of speech ? O Arab intellectuals ! Arise and destroy the myth of Mohammad's inspiration. The Arab nationalism has got to come into its own."

His faith cuts through the rulership and lineage of Quraish,
And denies the supremacy of the Arabs ;
In his eyes the high and the low are the same,
He ate out of the same dish with his slave.
Ignorant of the worth of the noble Arabs,
He franternized with the uncouth Ethiopians,
Redskins have been confounded with blackskins,
The honour of tribe and family has been destroyed.
This equality and fraternity are of *Ajam*,
I know well that Salman is a Mazdakite ;
The son of Abdullah[2] has been duped by him,
And he has brought disaster upon the Arab people.
Hashim's progeny has become estranged one from another,
The two *Rak'ats*[3] have utterly blinded them.
What is *Ajam* stock, compared with the Adnani[4],
Can the dumb vie in eloquence with Sahban[5] ?

1. *Mudhir* was the name of a famous tribe of the Quraish.
2. The Prophet's father was named Abdullah.
3. The *Namaz* consists of a number of cyclic parts each ending with two *Sajdas* (touching of the ground with the forehead). These parts are known as *Rak'ats*.
4. Adnan was the eponymous founder of a large Arab group of tribes, hence legendary ancestor of the Arab people.
5. A famous Arab orator.

The eyes of the elect of the Arabs have been darkened,
Will you not rise up, *Zubair*[1] from the dust of tomb,
You who are for us a guide in this desert,
Shatter the spell of the chant of Gabriel.

Turning to the Black Stone Abu Jahl asks why does it not support him. To Hubal he says, "O Lord ! Why don't you launch an attack on the faithless usurpers and drive them out of the ancient home ? Advance with your companions or send a sandstorm to destroy them." "O Lat and Manat," Abu Jahl goes on with his mournful beseeching, "Do not depart from our land, and, if you must, at least do not desert our hearts. Stay for a while so that I may see you to my heart's content."

Tell again, you Black Stone, now tell again,
Tell again what we have suffered from Mohammad ;
Hubal, thou who acceptest the prayers of thy servants,
Seize back thy home from the irreligious ones,
Expose their flock to the wild wolves,
Make their dates bitter on the palm-tree ;
Let loose a burning wind on the air of the desert,
As if they were stumps of fallen down palm-trees.
O Manat, O Lat, go not forth from this abode,
Or if you must, go not from our hearts ;
You who have forever a lodging in our eyes,
Tarry a little, if you intend to depart from me.

19

ECHO OF PAGANISM

Having sung of every conceivable subject on this sublunary planet, in *Javed Nama* (The Song of Eternity), Iqbal soars to other planets and visits the Valley of Venus which he describes as the abode of the ancient gods whom people used to worship during the days of Paganism. They carved their images and built shrines and tabernacles in their name. The influence of these deities was not restricted to belief and faith but had also permeated through poetry and literature.

The idols of all the Pagan deities, of Sun, Moon and Mercury, of the gods of Egypt and Yemen and the Lords of Iraq and Arabia and of the goddesses of union and separation were in the valley. Their forms were different, bearing witness to the sculptural skill of various peoples and communities. If one of them was holding a naked sword in its hand the other was wearing a snake round its neck. But whatever the divergences of form and shape the inner state of all of them was identical. They were overwhelmed with the fear of the 'Inspiration of Mohammad' that had led the mankind to revolt against their divinity and build up a new world on the basis of the Oneness of God.

When Mardukh carried the news of the poet's unexpected pilgrimage to Alha he was overjoyed. Believing it to be a happy augury for the gods and goddesses, Mardukh exclaimed,

1. The name of a celebrated pre-Islamic Arab poet.

"Congratulations to you! Man, again, has turned his back upon Allah and is returning to us. Having rejected the divine faiths he is coming back to ancient mythology and folklore. It, surely, is a ray of hope that has appeared after a long time in our desolate place and a wind of good cheer that has risen from the enslaved earth."

Mardukh said : 'Man has fled from God,
Fled from Church and *Harem*, lamenting ;
And to augment his vision and perception,
Turns his gaze backwards, to the past age.
Time has turned a new leaf,
A favourable wind is rising from yonder earth.'

Baal, the god of the Phoenicians and the Canaanites, was the first to greet the poet. He began to dance with joy.

"Man searched the skies," he said, "but could not find a trace of God there too. It shows that the Divine faith he boasts of is a myth. Religion is an idea that goes as quickly as it comes. It is like a wave, now rising, now subsiding. Man cannot attain self-fulfilment without a visible deity. Glory be to the Westerner who understood clearly the mentality of the East and revived us through the channels of study and research. Do not allow the golden opportunity to slip out of your hands which the Western statesmen have made available. Even the descendants of Ibrahim (Abraham) have forgotten the creed of Monotheism and consigned the covenant of eternity to oblivion. They have lost the joy of believing and, in the company of the Franks, cast to the winds all that they possessed including the faith brought to them by archangel Gabriel,"

Man has rent asunder the azure roof,
And, beyond the sky, seen no God.
What is there in man's heart but thoughts,
Like the waves, this rising and that subsiding ?
His soul finds peace in the manifest,
Would that the past age might return !

Long live the Frank, the knower of the East,
Who has made us rise from the tomb !

Behold the ring of Unity is broken,
Abraham's progeny has lost the joy of *Alast*[1] ;
Freeborn *Momin* has fallen into the bonds of directions,
Joined up with fatherland and parted from God;
His blood is frozen of the glory of the idolaters,
The old man of the *Harem* has tied the sacred thread.
Ancient gods, our time has come !

Hubal, in the same way, held forth : "The freeborn *Momin* who cared nothing for the distinctions of race, geography and nationality and knew not anyone save God, the Creator of the Worlds, now not only loves the homeland but even worships it and fights for it while he does not devote a moment to Divine remembrance."

"Today the whole World of Islam is caught in the web of Western thought and even its religious leaders have become the imitators of the West. For us the time is most favourable to act. We ought to take delight in the defeat of the Islamic faith. Nationalism, ultimately, has triumphed and a thousand storms of Abu Lahab are raging to blow out the lamp of Mohammad. It is true we still hear the sound of *La Ilaha Illallah* but only from the lips. It does not spring from the hearts and what is not rooted in the heart does not remain for long also on the lips. The magic of the West has once again plunged the world into darkness and ejected religion. These disciples of ours are doing excellent work. They have renounced the world and taken refuge in caves and forests. We had released our followers from the duties of worship and obedience

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1. 'The day primordial'. Literally it means *Am I not?* as described in the Quran : VII, 171.

and allowed them complete freedom from restraint. We had given them singing and clapping in the place of solemn veneration and sanctified dancing and music. We did not believe in the dull and monotonous *Namaz* which was bereft of music. Our influence is still felt among men who like the visible idols better than the invisible God."

The days of joy have returned to the world,
Religion has been routed by country and lineage.
What fear is there now from the lamp of Mustafa,
Seeing that a hundred Bu Lahabs blow it out ?
Though the sound of *La Ilah* comes still,
What goes out of the heart how on the lips can remain ?
Ahriman[1] has revived the magic of the West,
The day of Yazdan[2] is pale with the fear of the night.

Band of religion from his neck must be loosed,
Our slave was ever a free bondmen ;
Since the *Namaz* is heavy for him,
We seek only one *Rak'at*, and that without prostration.
Passions are aroused by songs,
What pleasure is there in prayers without music ?
Better than God who remains out of sight,
Is the demon that makes itself visible.
Ancient gods, our time has come !

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1 & 2. Ahriman was the god of evil and Yazdan the god of good among the ancient Iranians.

20

WITH JAMALUDDIN AFGHANI

On his intellectual and spiritual journey, in the company of the Sage of Rum, Iqbal encounters some of the personalities of the past who had played a leading part in the history of Islam, particularly in its later period. He is then transported to a valley that has never known the conquest of man. It abounds in natural scenery—'a world of mountains and plains, seas and dry land'. Iqbal wonders how a place as fair as that could remain free from the effects of civilisation.

Iqbal is deeply impressed by the idyllic sorroundings. In the meantime, he hears the sound of *Azan* coming from a distance and looks at Maulana Rum in wondrous excitement. The Maulana reassures him that it was the valley of the Friends of Allah with which they, too, had a close association for it was there that Adam had stayed for a few days after being commanded to leave the Heaven and those expanses had felt the burning of his sighs and heard his lamentations of the hour of dawn. Only pious men, such as, Fudail, Bu Sa'id and Junaid and Bayazid could dare make the pilgrimage to it. Maulana Rum invites Iqbal to offer the prayer of love of which they had remained denied in the material world.

They move on and see two men engaged in prayer, one of whom is an Afghan (Jamaluddin Afghani)[1] and the other a

1. Jamaluddin Afghani (1838-1897) was one of the leading figures in the 19th Century revivalist movement and a pioneer of Islamic unity.

Turk (Saʿid Halim Pasha)[1]. The Sage of Rum tells Iqbal that no Eastern mother had borne a nobler son than any of the two. Both of them had relentlessly striven for the emancipation of the East, particularly Jamaluddin Afghani who had infused a new life into its dead body. Saʿid Halim Pasha was a man of great vision and earnestness whose mind was as luminous as his soul was restless. Two *Rak'ats* of *Namaz* offered behind them were more valuable than life-long devotions.

Jamaluddin Afghani recites the *Sura*[2] of *An-Najm*[3] (The Star) and a wave of ardour and excitement runs through the place. The appropriateness of the *Sura*, the fullness of the heart of the reciter and the beauty and sublimity of the Quran produce an atmosphere of rare feeling and intensity. Were Abraham and Gabriel to hear the soulful recitation they would be moved to ecstasy. The recitation of the vigorous leader could have made the cry of *No God but God* rise from the graves and bestowed ardour and ecstasy on David. Every mystery is revealed by the recital and the Heavenly Archetype stands unveiled.

After the *Namaz* is over Iqbal kisses the hand of the leader in all humility and Maulana Rum introduces the poet as a restless soul, a tireless traveller and an obdurate dreamer. He calls him *Zinda Rud* (the Living River).

Afghani enquires from him about the state of the world and of the Muslims. Iqbal replies, "O my master! The Muslim community that had been raised up for the conquest of the world is caught in the tangle of religion and country. The strength of conviction has departed from it and it has begun to lose faith even in the universality of Islam. Consequently, it is

1. Sa'id Halim Pasha (1838-1914) was a prominent Ottoman statesman.
2. Meaning a Chapter of the Quran.
3. LIII Chapter of the Quran.

leaning more and more on nationalism for support. The Turks and the Iranians are intoxicated with the West. They have walked into its trap. On the other hand, Communism is playing havoc with the honour and dignity of the *Millet*."

> The spirit is dead in the body through weakness of faith,
> It has despaired of the strength of the manifest religion ;
> Turk, Persian, Arab intoxicated with Europe'
> And in the throat of each the fish-hook of Europe ;
> The East laid waste by the West's Imperialism,
> Communism has taken the lustre from religion and community.

Deeply hurt, as Jamaluddin Afghani is, by what the poet tells he listens to him attentively. In the end, he remarks, "The deceiver of the West has taught the lesson of Nationalism to the East. On his own part, he is always on the look out for new dominions but wants to keep you permanently divided. You must, therefore, come out of its prison-house and play a universal role. The Muslim should regard every country his home. If you are prudent you will rise above the 'world of brick and stone'. Islam breaks the shackles of materialism and teaches self-awareness. He who realises God even the universe cannot contain him. Weeds come out of the dust and return to it but with mankind it is different. Man is made of clay but his soul is celestial. His external existence is inclined towards the earth but inwardly he belongs to another world. The soul is ill at ease with material limitations. It is unaccustomed to restraints and restrictions. When it is shut in the cage of Nationalism it feels stifled. Falcons do not like to live in nests, what to speak of cages.

"The handful of dust we call country and to which we give the name of Egypt, Syria or Iraq has, undoubtedly, a claim on us but it does not mean that we should confine ourselves to it and cease to look across its frontiers. The sun rises in the East

but its rays fall on the East and the West alike. It knows no bounds though its rising and setting is governed by the laws of time and space."

What is religion? To rise up from the face of the dust,
So that the soul may become aware of itself!
He who has said *God is He* is not contained,
Within the confines of the order of four dimensions.
The body says: 'Go into the dust of the roadway',
The soul says: 'Look upon the expanse of the universe'!
Man of reason, soul is not contained in life's limits,
The free man is a stranger to every fetter and chain.
Though it is of the East that the sun rises,
Showing itself bold and bright, without a veil;
Its nature is innocent of both East and West,
Though by relationship, true, it is an Easterner.

Afghani, further, says that "Communism is a figment of the Jew's imagination who mixed up truth with falsehood and whose mind was steeped in infidelity though his heart believed. It is a tragedy of the West that having lost sight of transcendental truths it is trying to seek them out in matter and stomach. The vitality of the soul is not dependent on the body but Communism does not go beyond the belly and womb.

"The creed of Karl Marx is founded upon the equality of stomachs while the roots of the brotherhood of man lie in love, fellow-feeling and compassion and not in physical equality."

The Westerners have lost the track of the heavens,
They go hunting for the pure soul in the body.
The pure soul takes not colour and scent from the body,
And Communism has nothing to do save with the body.
The religion of that apostle who knew not truth,
Is founded upon equality of the belly;

The abode of fraternity being in the heart,
Its roots are in the heart, not in water and clay.

About Capitalism Afghani observes that "however attractive it may seem its heart is dark, soul enervated and conscience dead. Like the honey-bee it flits from flower to flower, sucking the nectar. The freshness of the flowers, apparently, suffers no loss but they actually die and little is left to choose between them and the paper-flowers. Likewise, Capitalism preys upon nations and individuals and reduces them to skeletons. Greed, godlessness and inhumanity are common to Communism and Capitalism. If life in Communism is *Khurooj* (production) in Capitalism it is *Khiraj* (taxation), and between these two stones the soul of man is caught like a glass. Communism is the enemy of faith and knowledge while Capitalism is the enemy of humanity. Materialism is the article of faith with both of them. Their exterior is faultless and immaculate but the interior is guilty and reprehensible."

The soul of both of them is impatient, restless,
Both of them know not God, and deceive mankind.
One lives by production, the other by taxation,
And between these two stones man is caught like a glass.
The one puts to flight science, religion, art,
The other robs the body of soul, the hand of bread.
I have seen them both drowned in water and clay,
Both bodily bright, both utterly dark of heart.
Life means a passionate burning, an urge to make,
To cast in the dead clay the seed of a heart,

Afghani complains that the conduct of the Muslims does not conform to the teachings of the Quran. Confusion and discord have set in among them and their attachment to the Prophet is a thing of the past. Today the Muslims do not mould their individual and collective existence according to Quranic guidance with the result that both materially and

spiritually they are backward. They destroyed the despotic order of Caesar and Chosroes but have themselves become the upholders of monarchy and patrons of un-Islamic statecraft.

In his heart there is no burning fire,
Mustafa no longer lives in his breast;
The *Momin* has not eaten the fruit of the Quran,
In his cup I saw neither wine nor dregs.
He broke the magic spell of Caesar and Chosroes,
And himself sat on the imperial throne.

To the Russians Afghani sends the message that since, like the Muslims, they too have destroyed the order of Caesar and Chosroes they should learn from their example and remain steadfast in the battle of life. After breaking the idols of monarchy and nationalism they should not even think of them. The world, today, needs a community which may be a bearer of glad tidings as well as a warner, stern as well as mild, severe as well as benevolent. The Russians should imbibe religiousness and spirituality from the East since the West has grown inwardly bankrupt. Now that they have completed the stage of 'negation' they must march onward to 'but' so that the goal of living affirmation may be reached. If they are really keen to establish a world order they should first provide themselves with a solid foundation which faith alone can furnish. Having expunged each and every line of humbug and superstition they ought to study the Quran verse by verse. They will then realise how the Quran is opposed to imperial rule and exploitation. It is the sentence of death for Capitalism and succour for the slave, the worker and the downtrodden. It enjoins the spending of wealth that may be in excess of one's needs on the poor and the needy. It prohibits usury and sanctions commerce. It exhorts people to deeds of monetary good-doing like *Qarz-i-Hasna*[1] and

1. Money lent without interest and repaid at the convenience of the borrower.

Sadqa-i-Jariya[1]. Is usury not at the root of all the ills of the world? The Quran holds that the land belongs to God. Man can put it to his use but he is not the real owner. His position is that of a trustee. *And spend of that whereof He hath made you trustees*[2]. Kings and sovereigns have lowered the banner of knowledge and used mankind selfishly. The Quran gives the call of truth and justice and declares the earth to be a vast table-spread for the whole of the human race. It holds that all men make a single family. *Your creation and your raising are only as (the creation and the raising of) a single soul*[3]. Hence, when the Quranic kingdom was established the extremist monks and hermits went into hiding and the magic spell of the Church was broken. The Quran is much more than a book. It reconstructs mankind. It creates a new man, and, through him, a new world. It is the living gospel of guidance and felicity. It is the pulsation of the heart of the universe and the refuge of humanity. The destinies of the East and the West are bound up with it. You have laid down a new law and enforced a new constitution. It is now essential that you looked at the world from the viewpoint of the Quran so that the reality of things was revealed to you.

> Who gave the 'luminous hand' to the black man?
> Who gave the good news of no Caesar, no Chosroes?
> Without the Quran the lion is a wolf,
> The *Faqr* of the Quran is the root of kingship.
> The *Faqr* of the Quran is the mingling of meditation and reason,
> Without meditation I never saw reason mature,
> What is the Quran? Sentence of death for the master,
> Succour for the slave without food and wherewithal.

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1. An act of charity which is of lasting benefit.
2. LVII : 7
3. XXXI : 28

It is lawful to draw one's sustenance from the earth—
This is man's wherewithal, the property of God.
When the Quran's design descended into the world,
It shattered the images of priest and pope ;
I speak openly what is hidden in my heart—
This is not a book, it is something other !
When it has entered the soul, the soul becomes different,
When the soul has been changed, the world is changed,
Like God, it is at once hidden and manifest,
Living and enduring and, of course, speaking.
In it are destinies of East and West,
Produces the swiftness of thought like lightning.
It told the Muslim, 'Put your life in your hands;
Give whatever you possess beyond your needs'.
You have created a new law and constitution,
Look around a little in the light of the Quran ;
Life's heights and depths you will come to know,
And you will understand the destiny of existence.

21

AT THE DOOR-STEP OF THE PROPHET

Love for the Prophet and yearning for Medina were the ruling passions of Iqbal's life. His poems are full of glowing references to them. During the last phase of his life this tender yet all encompassing devotion had become so intense that he was moved to tears at the very mention of the name of Medina. As things would have it, he could not make the pilgrimage to the blessed city with his frail frame but spiritually he was there all the time.

Iqbal speaks of the holy Prophet in a thousand ways in his verses. Over and over again he pays to him the tribute of love and while beseeching him draws a poignant picture of the Muslim *Millet.* On such occasions his poetic genius attains the finest state of development and fountains of thought and emotion spring into life. The truths he had discreetly held back begin to unfold themselves freely and without constraint.

In a word could the world of desire be told, but
To stay in his presence I prolonged the story.

Some of Iqbal's most stirring poems have been written on the theme of love for the Prophet, displaying a rare beauty of diction and richness of illustration. In every line of them the poet makes us feel that he has something to say which is not only worth saying, but is also fitted to give us pleasure.

In the verses we are going to reproduce the poet undertakes an imaginary journey to Arabia, to the twin cities of

Mecca and Medina. In eager expectation he presses on. The sand under his feet appears to him to be softer than silk ; every particle of it seems to have turned into a heart, beating, throbbing and pulsating. To the camel-driver he tells to be mindful of these tiny hearts and move slowly.

Blessed be the desert whose evenings cheerful as the dawn,
Whose nights are short and days exalted ;
Tread softly, O traveller ! Softly still,
Each particle here is afflicted like us.

The song of the *Hadi-Khwan*[1] intensifies his restlessness, the wounds of his heart re-open and verses of breath-taking elegance begin to take shape spontaneously.

In the same mood of elevation Iqbal betakes himself to the *Mowajaha*[2] of the holy Prophet and sends respectful *Durood* (benediction) and *Salam* (salutation) to him. The tongue of love becomes the spokesman of the heart and taking advantage of the precious moments the poet unburdens himself of his feelings and relieves his mind by speaking of the woes and worries of the Muslims. He complains of the utter helplessness of the Islamic World, its shameful capitulation to the Western Civilization and the utter disregard of his message by his own people.

Iqbal has given the title of *Armughan-i-Hejaz* (The Gift of Arabia) to the collection of these verses, and, to be sure, it is a most valuable offering for the entire World of Islam, an incense-breathing draft of the morning breeze from Hejaz.

Musk-laden is the zephyr today,
Beloved's tresses, haply, are loosened in wind's direction.

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1. The song-leader of the caravan.
2. The place in the Prophet's Mosque at Medina where one stands 'face-to-face' with him.

Iqbal made this spiritual journey when he was more than sixty years old and broken down in health. At that age people generally like to retire from active life. But if the poet still embarked upon the arduous undertaking it was only in response to the call of love and in fulfilment of the high aim of his life.

Despite old age I took the way to *Yathrib*[1],
Singing with the ecstasy of love ;
Like the bird which in the evening,
Spreads its wings eagerly for the nest.

He asks if in the evening of life he decided to go to Medina, which was the true dwelling-place of the soul and the real abode of the *Momin*, what was strange in it ? Just as the birds at sunset fly back to their nests his spirit, too, was restless to return to the place to which it actually belonged.

As Iqbal's camel gathers speed he tells it to go slow as the rider is week and infirm but it pays no heed and continues to trot joyously as if it is not the desert but a silken carpet has been spread for it.

At morn I told the camel to take it easy,
For the rider is old and sick;
But it goes on merrily as if,
The sand under its hooves is silk.

The caravan presses on with its offerings of *Durood* and *Salam* and, in that entrancing atmosphere, Iqbal wishes to perform the genuflexion of love on the burning sands that would leave a permanent mark on his forehead and exhorts his companions to do the same.

Blessed is the desert in which the caravans,
Recite the *Durood* as they press forward ;
Carry out on its hot sands the prostration,
That burns the forehead and leaves its mark.

1. Madina.

Iqbal begins to sing verses from *Iraqi*[1] and *Jami*[2] and it sets the people wondering in what language the lines were which were filling their hearts with agony and making them forget hunger and thirst even though they did not understand their meaning.

Tell caravan-leader, who the non-Arab is ?
His song is not of Arabia ;
But the tune is refreshing to the heart,
So that one could live in the desert without water.

Iqbal rejoices in the hardships of the journey and exhaustion and loss of sleep are a source of comfort to him. The way is not long and tiring for him and he has no desire to reach his destination quickly. On the contrary, he begs the camel-driver to take an even longer route so that the period of waiting is extended.

Let the traveller's suffering be more delightful,
And his lamentation even more frenzied ;
Take a longer route thou camel-driver,
And make the fire of separation burn stronger.

The poet, thus, completes the journey and arrives at Medina. To his travelling companion he says, "We both are the prisoners of the same ringlet. The opportunity has, at last, come to us to fulfil our heart's desire and spread our eyelashes at the feet of the beloved. Let us lift restrictions from our eyes and allow the storm that is brewing in them to have a full play."

Come, O friend, let us weep together,
We both are victims of beauty's aureole;
Give a free rein to what lies buried in the heart,
And rub our eyes at Master's feet.

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1 & 2. Two fomous Persian poets whose poems in praise of the Prophet are highly popular among Muslims.

Iqbal marvels at his fate that such a boon has been conferred upon him and a worthless beggar like him favoured with presence in the magnificent durbar to which kings and savants fail to gain admission.

> The worth of the wise men was rated low,
> And to simpleton a raptrous glimpse was granted;
> How blessed, indeed, and how fortunate,
> The sovereign's door for the beggar was opened;

Even in that hour of supreme bliss Iqbal does not forget the Muslims, specially of India. He relates their pitiful state with the full force of his eloquence.

> The Muslim, that beggar with the air of kings,
> Smoke of the sigh from his bosom has fled;
> He weeps but why? He does not know,
> A glance at him, O Apostle of Allah.

He feels that the tragedy with the Muslims is that they have fallen from a great height and the higher the place from where one falls the more is one hurt.

> Of the afflicted beggar what to tell,
> The Muslim of noble descent;
> God bless the brave, hardy man,
> From a high terrace he has fallen!

The Muslims are disunited and leaderless. This is the main cause of their misery. They are a collection of individuals with no unanimity of action or attitude.

> The blue sky is still unkind,
> Aimlessly the caravan wends its way;
> Of their disunity what to speak,
> You know the Muslims are without a leader.

The blood of the Muslims has run cold and they have ceased to throw up men of outstanding stature which was once their speciality. Since long their scabbard has been lying empty and the 'withered garden' of the Muslim community has lost the capacity to send forth new blossoms.

His blood that heat possesses no more,
In his garden the tulips have ceased to grow;
His scabbard as empty as his purse,
The Book laid on the shelf in his desolate home.

Iqbal grieves at the metamorphosis that has come over the Muslims. The joy of seeking has deserted their hearts and they have become slothful and ease-loving. Their ears have got accustomed to soft mnsic and the call of the men of freedom makes no impression on them.

His heart he made a captive of hue and scent,
And emptied it of desire and yearning;
The loud cry of the falcon they seldom hear,
Whose ears get used to mosquito's humming sound.

In the eyes of the Muslims there is neither the light of faith nor the intoxication of love. His heart does not beat any longer for 'someone' nor is his bosom tenanted by 'anyone's' remembrance. He is far removed from the state of 'nearness' and very much away from the 'desired goal'.

In his eye neither light nor joy,
Nor the heart in his bosom restless;
God help the *Millet* whose death,
Is from soul devoid of presence.

Iqbal compares the present condition of the Muslims with their glorious past and complains reverentially to God that those whom He had brought up on fruit and honey are now going from door to door and seeking sustenance in arid lands.

Ask me not his condition,
The earth is as mean to him as the sky;
The bird Thou hast brought up on fruit,
For it the quest of grain in the desert is unbearable.

The poet then speaks of the storm of atheism that is moving fast towards the World of Islam. As a scholar of philosophy and economics he knows that godlessness is making its way into the Muslim World through materialism, spiritual vacuum and

frigidity of the heart. The extravagant ways of living are adding fuel to the fire. Iqbal believes that the mounting challenge of atheism can be met with love and righteousness. If anything can beat back the threat it is the pattern of life Abu Bakr Siddiq had set. He desires for Muslims the design of living that is comprehensive of all the aspects of existence. The whole world will then be obliged to treat them with respect.

Irreligiousness has shaken the world,
From the attributes of body they deduce about soul;
Out of the *Faqr* Thou bestowed on Siddiq,
Produce restlessness for this lover of ease.

The real cause of the degradation of Muslims is not poverty but the extinction of the flame of love that once used to burn in their hearts. When these beggars used to bow before nobody except God the collar of the kings was in their hands but as the inner fire died out in them they took refuge in shrines and monasteries.

The beggars till they mustered in the mosque,
They tore the collar of the kings;
Buty when the fire within them died,
The Muslims sought shelter in the shrines.

Iqbal looks carefully into the record of the Muslims and discovers enough in it to fill him with shame. Their conduct has nothing to do with the teachings of the Prophet and the precepts of Islam. Such glaring instances of polytheistic deportment, worship of non-God and insincere praise of tyrannical rulers meet the eye that no self-respecting man can remain without being overcome with a sense of guilt. Sorrowfully, he admits that with these limits of debasement the Muslims are clearly unworthy of God and have no right to be associated with Him.

No one but ourselves I have to blame,
We proved not worthy of Thy Grace.

The World of Islam has grown sterile and bankrupt. The

ewers of Sufi-lodges are empty and the seminaries have become hollow and imitative. They simply are following the beaten track. Poetry and literature show no signs of life.

Ewers of Sufi-lodges contain no wine,
The seminary follows the beaten track ;
From the assembly of poets I rose dejected,
Melody from the reed comes out dead.

The poet says that he went round the Islamic World but nowhere did he find the fearless, undaunted Muslim of whom death itself was afraid.

I flew with the wings you gave me,
And burnt myself with the fire of my song ;
The Muslim that made death tremble with fear,
I searched in the world but did not find.

Analysing the causes of the frustration and waywardness of the Muslims Iqbal remarks that be it an individual or a community if it possesses the heart but does not have the loved one it is bound to be devoid of peaee ; its energies are wasted and its endeavours lack cohesion.

One night before God I wailed,
Down in the world why Muslims are ?
Came the reply : "Don't you know,
This community possesses the heart but not the beloved ?"

All the dreary circumstances notwithstanding Iqbal is not despondent. He has neither lost hope in the Muslims nor despaired of the mercy of God. On the other hand, he is severely critical of the prophets of doom and of those who rely thoughtlessly upon others and look at everything through their eyes. With profound anguish he observes that the custodians of the *Harem* have become the keepers of the idol-temple; their faith has lost its vitality and their vision is not their own.

Custodian of the *Harem* is idol-hall's architect,
His faith is dead and eyes not his own ;

From his look it is plain, apparent,
He has lost all hope in the possibility of good.

Though the Muslims are weak and helpless they are more highminded than the kings. If their due place is given to them for a time their world-illumining charm can turn into all-conquering strength.

Though the Muslim is without corps and battalions,
His soul is the soul of a king ;
If he gets his rightful place again,
His charm is might overwhelming.

Grieving over the injustice and callousness of the times Iqbal says :

Occasionally I go and occasionally rise,
What blood do I shed without a sword !
Cast a loving glance from the terrace,
I am up in arms against my Age.

His whole life was spent in struggle against the modern times. He exposed the brutish materialism of the Western Civilisation and rejected it out of hand. He was a real benefactor of the growing generations. He was a rebel as well as a reformer, a revolutionary as well as redeemer.

Like Rumi I gave my *Azan* in the *Harem*,
From him I learnt mysteries of the Self ;
He during the mischief of the bygone days was born,
And I during the mischief of the present times.

The poet speaks with pride of his revolt against the modern educational system and tells how he managed to preserve his faith and individuality in the midst of trials and temptations. In the fire of Western thought he claims to have displayed the supreme indifference of Hazrat Ibrahim (Abraham).

The spell of modern education I broke,
I picked the grain and left the net alone ;
God knows how in the manner of Ibrahim,
I sat in its fire easy in mind.

Iqbal regards his stay in Europe to have been, on the whole, barren and unproductive. Dry books, vain philosophical disputations, alluring beauty and pleasing sights were all that there was to remember. If he gained anything from it it was self-abandonment that nearly deprived him of Selfhood.

I gave my heart to Frankish idols,
In the heat of temple-dwellers I melted ;
Such a stranger I became in my own eyes,
That when I saw myself I could not recognise.

Even now when he recalls the dull and dreary time he spent in the West he feels sad and frustrated. He bemoans that the tavern of Europe gave him nothing but headache. He never had a more depressing experience than what he underwent in the company of Western intellectuals.

I imbibed wine in the alehouse of the West,
And with my life I purchased headache ;
I sat in the company of wise men of Europe,
And never had spent a more unprofitable time.

Iqbal, then, humbly addresses these words to the Prophet: "I have been brought up on thy loving glance. The fine arguments and weighty discussions of men of learning make me sick. I am the petitioner at your door, the beggar of your street. Why should I dash my head against the doorstep of anyone else ?"

I am beggar and from you I ask what I do,
In my wretched body I want a mountain-hewing heart ;
Philosophical discourses give me pain in the head,
For I have been brought up on your loving glance.

The poet turns his attention to Muslim theological doctors, the Ulema, who are supposed to be the custodians of religious knowledge and expresses digust at their intellectual sterility, pedantic affectation and fondness for hackneyed expressions. Their Arabian desert possesses neither the spring of *Zam Zam* nor

the House of Ka'aba while the real worth of the desert of Arabia lies in the two Landmarks of Allah. Without them who would care for its blistering sands and mute hills? How empty-handed the theologians are who command a large fund of knowledge and a fluent tongue but whose eye does not contain a tear of love and heart is devoid of a throb and who have received only heat and hardness from the sacred land and not coolness and moisture!

The heart of *Mulla*[1] is innocent of grief,
His eye is seeing but not moist;
I rose from the seminary because,
In his Arabian desert no *Zam Zam* gushes.

Iqbal confesses that once he relied upon the non-God and in punishment was flung down from his place two hundred times. This is the state where neither the strength of arm avails nor the resourcefulness of mind. Only the Divine Will prevails and even a minor aberration can be one's undoing.

I placed my heart in nobody's hand,
Myself the knots I unravelled;
Upon other than God I once relied,
And fell down from my station two hundred times.

In these heartless, hypocritical times which recognise only the law of gain and expediency and in which man has become a cog in the wheel what can Iqbal do except eating his heart out and brooding over the gloomy turn of events?

My eye is indifferent to what I see,
The heart is melting in inner fire;
Me, and these soulless, unfeeling times,
What an enigma it really is? Tell me!

Iqbal is oppressed by a feeling of loneliness. In the wide world he is without a friend and a sympathiser. He is his own

1. *Mulla* is the self-styled priest of Islam which, as a religion, recognises no priesthood.

consoler and comforter.

In the East and the West I am a stranger,
Friendless and forlorn, no confidant have I ;
I relate my sorrow to my own heart,
How innocently loneliness do I cheat.

No one listens to him nor cares to taste the fruits of his knowledge. His verses in which he strikes the chords of the unknown fall on deaf ears. They regard him to be a reciter of love lyrics and not a revealer of reality.

They understand not the secret I reveal,
Nor eat the fruit of my tree ;
O leader of nations ! I seek justice from you,
They look upon me as a reciter of *Ghazal.*

The command of the holy Prophet is that he should carry the message of life and eternity to mankind but the unknowing friends want him to compose chronograms like an ordinary rhymester.

You command me to sing of eternity,
And impart to dead the message of life ;
But these unknowing men demand,
That I record in verses the dates of the death of this man and that.

Iqbal complains of the indifference of his people to the knowledge and message which is the essence of his poetry. He displayed all of his goods in the market place but there were no buyers. He wanted to make the offering of his heart but no one was willing to accept it.

I've placed my heart on the palm but there were no takers,
I possess the merchandise but where's the plunderer ?
Come and make my bosom your home,
Because no Muslim is lonelier than me.

In the end, Iqbal speaks to Ibn-i-Saud of Arabia but what he tells him is really meant for all the rulers of the Muslim

World. He warns King Saud against placing reliance on the foreigners and advises him not to trust anyone except God and himself. "If the rope is yours," says he, "you can pitch the tent wherever you like. But you will have no freedom of movement if it is a borrowed one. Try to know yourself. You occupy such a privileged position on the earth that your evening is more lustrous than the morning of others."

Your station in the arid desert is such,
That like the moon your evening shines as mirror ;
Pitch your tent wherever you want,
To borrow rope from others is forbiddden.

22

COMPLAINT AND PRAYER

Iqbal was a true believer. His faith in Islam was unbounded. With him it was the well-spring of strength and the paramount mark of distinction in the world. A vast fund of knowledge was of no value before a simple, unsophisticated faith. In one of his verses he says that the ascetic possesses nothing save an undying faith in *La-Ilah-Illalah* and the affirmation of its plain import while the preachers and legists have accumulated a pile of explanations and commentaries but they have no idea of its fundamental significance. These *Qaruns*[1], as he prefers to call them, have the wealth but not the heart to make use of it.

> The *Dervish*[2] possesses nought but the two words of
> *La Ilah,*
> The legist of town is the *Qarun* of Arabic lexicon.

Devotion to the Prophet and loyalty to his message were more precious to Iqbal than life. He held that to turn to anyother source for instruction and enlightenment was derogatory to the spirit of love and self-respect.

> O master, keep an eye on the honour of your beggar :
> Who refuses to fill his cup from anyone else's stream.

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1. Same as Korah, proverbial for his wealth and avarice.
2. Aesetic.

Once, during the ultimate period of his life, Iqbal was staying at Bhopal, mainly for medical treatment, as he had been constantly ill since 1934. Despite decadent physical strength his intellect remained as keen as ever and the woeful state of Muslims never ceased to gnaw at his heart. Moved by the moral and spiritual degeneration of his co-religionists, the dearth of truly Islamic personalities among them and the infatuation of the growing generations for the Western Civilisation and their indifference towards their own values and ideals he wrote an inspiring poem on April 13, 1936 in which he made a fervent appeal to the sacred Prophet and complained to him about the mental and material backwardness of the *Millet* and its debasement after elevation.

He said, "I beg to make an accusation against the *Ummat* which is, today, seized with the fear of death. You broke the idols of Lat and Manat, re-built the world and gave it a fresh lease of life. By virtue of it, belief and faith, ardour and earnestness and worship and piety command respect in the world and humanity is deriving joy and effulgence, awareness and enlightenment from the Formula of Confession you taught. I, too, was born in an idolatrous land but rose above the worship of stones and animals. I neither submitted to monks and priests nor bent my knee before gods and godesses nor kissed the door-steps of kings and noblemen. It all is the gift of your faith and the fruit of your endeavours. I, also, have picked crumbs from your table-spread at which the whole world has been sitting and helping itself freely. Your personality and your sayings have been the focus of love and source of inspiration to the *Ummat* for hundreds of years. It is solely due to your teachings that it has remained self-respecting in poverty and lofty-minded in indigence. But, today, the World of Islam has devaluated itself. It has lost a good deal of its worth and importance."

Oh you, solace for us, the downtrodden,
Deliver the community from fear of death.

You destroyed Lat and Manat of old,
And revived the timeworn world.
Meditation and remembrance of man and djinn,
You are the morning prayer, call of *Azan*.
Burning and ecstasy is from *La-Ilah*,
In the night of doubt light is from *La-Ilah*.
We made not god from quadruped,
Nor bowed low before the hermit,
Nor bent the knee before ancient gods,
Nor circumambulated round palaces of kings.
This, too, among your countless favours,
Our thought is the product of your teachings.
Your remembrance the wealth of joy and ardour,
Which keeps the *Millet* proud in poverty.
Goal and destination of every wayfarer,
Your desire in the heart of each traveller.
Our harp, alas, has become so mute,
Plectrum is a burden upon its strings.

The poet goes on: "I travelled extensively in the Muslim World and visited the Arab and non-Arab countries but found that your followers were few and the disciples of Abu Lahab numerous. The mind of the Muslim youth is luminous but his heart is dark. He has become lazy and listless. Generations of Muslims have come up, one after the other, that are so thoroughly slavish in outlook that they can not even dream of freedom. Modern education has deprived the Muslim young men of their spiritual heritage and rendered them ineffective. Unappreciative of their own worth, they are following the West blindly. They solicit alms from Western Powers and feel no hesitation in bartering away their souls. The eaglets have turned into wagtails, timid and fainthearted.

"The mentors of the rising generations, good for nothing themselves, have failed to impart to them the lesson of Selfhood. They do not teach them what they really are and how can they

discover themselves. In the fire of the West they are melting like wax.

"The Muslim has forgotten the joy of martyrdom and lost faith in the Omnipotence of God. *No one is all-powerful save Allah.* He is concerned only with the transient life of the world and stretching a begging hand, for a loaf of bread, has become his profession. Instead of breaking the idols the progeny of Ibrahim is carving and importing them from the West.

"The present generation of the Muslims needs a renaissance. The command of *Rise by the Command of Allah* has to be given to it again. The West has not bewitched but killed us without firing a shot. You upturned the thrones of Caesar and Chosroes. Today, a man of faith is needed once more to break the spell of Western Civilisation."

I wandered in Ajam and in Arabia,
Bu Lahab in plenty, Mustafa scarce.
The Muslim youth, radiant of mind,
His soul in darkness, without a lamp.
Soft and delicate, silk-like, in prime,
Desire from his bosom has departed.
The slave, son of a slave, son of a slave,
Liberty to his mind is strictly tabooed.
Seminary has robbed him of the spirit of faith,
Of it he knows only that it was.
Stranger to himself, intoxicated with West,
Seeker of barley-bread from the hand of the West.
He bought a loaf in return for soul,
And, in utter pain, made me groan.
Picker of grain like a lowly bird,
Knows not what the blue skies are !
The school-master, lacking in vision, narrow of mind,
Never did he show him his place in the world.
In the fire of the Frank he has melted away,
Hell it is though of another make.

Momin and yet ignorant of the mystery of death,
La Ghalib-ul-Allah[1] abides in his heart no more.
Bewitched we are by the Civilisation of the West,
Victims of the Frank without war and struggle.
From among the people whose cup is broken,
Raise up a God-intoxicated man of faith ;
So that the Muslim may rediscover himself,
And rise above the world of time and space.

Iqbal cries to the Prophet, "O Glorious horseman of Arabia ! For God's sake give me an opportunity to kiss your stirrup so that I may relate my agony though my tongue is tied and a struggle is going on within me between love and deference. Love says, 'Speak up ; the friend is near,' while respectfulness forbids. 'Shut your mouth and open the eyes,' it tells. But eagerness is getting the better of restraint."

O horseman, pull the reins for a while,
Speech is not coming easy to me.
My feelings I may be able to express or not,
Love can at no time be subservient to respect.
One says, 'Speak up, O afflicted one,'
The other : 'Open your eyes and seal the lips.'

"O my master !" the poet says, "I am the rotten prey no hunter cared to look at. I have run up to you. My voice is choking in my throat with emotion. The flame of the heart does not leap upto the tongue. The blazing breath of mine is charged no longer with inner heat. I am losing interest in the pre-dawn recitation of the Quran. The breath for which there is no place in the bosom can reside in it only as a prisoner. What it craves for are the boundless spaces of the firmament. Only in your glance lies the cure of my physical and spiritual ailments. Physicians' prescriptions do not agree with my withered soul. I cannot tolerate their bitter potions. Have pity on

1. No one is all-powerful save Allah.

me and prescribe some palatable remedy. Like Busieri I beseech you to give me back the departed song. . The sinners are more deserving of your intercession. Don't mothers show greater affection to their weakly children ?"

Round you the universe rotates,
From you I beg a kindly glance.
My knowledge, thought, meditation are you,
My boat, ocean and storm are you.
The shrine of your street is my refuge,
Hopefully have I run up to you.
Ah ! The agony of my body and soul,
A glance of yours is the sovereign remedy.
Like Busieri I beg deliverance from you,
That the day that was may return again.
Your mercy on the sinners is greater,
In forgiveness it is like mother's love.

Iqbal continues : "I have always been at war with the worshippers of the night. Let my torch burn brighter. The period of your existence was the spring-time of mankind, the season of flowers for the world. Why should a gust of the life-giving zephyr not come towards me and a ray of the world-illumining sun not light up a lowly particle of dust ? The worth of the body is from the spirit and the spirit is from the breath of the beloved.

"My intellect took me to the realms of philosophy and jurisprudence and enabled me to unravel the mysteries of Faith and *Shariat* but in the field of action my courage failed. My task is even harder than that of Farhad. I need greater firmness and perseverance than him to put my capabilities to proper use in the contemporary world. I beg you to sharpen the edge of my sword. It is blunt but the steel is well-tempered.

"Though I have wasted my life and ill-spent my youth there is a thing called Heart which I have carefully preserved. I have always been proud of it for it has borne, from the first day,

the imprint of your foot. The slave who is concerned only with the good pleasure of his master pays no attention to the world. For him separation from the master is death.

"O Chosen One who endowed the Kurd[1] with the burning passion of the Arab ! Listen to an Indian who has come to you with a bleeding heart. Even friends are not aware of his predicament. He is the flute that has got separated from its origin but in whose bosom sorrowful tunes are still rising in memory of the days of union.

"I am the dry wood of the desert after setting fire to which the caravan moved away but which is still smouldering and waiting anxiously for another caravan to arrive and turn it into a blaze."

O you whose existence world's early spring,
Keep not your shadow away from me !
The worth of body is from soul, you know,
And the worth of soul is from the beloved.
That I rely upon no one save God,
Turn me either into a sword or key.
Keen in the understanding of religion my intellect,
But seed of action in my field did not sprout.
Sharpen my axe for the task before me,
Is harder than even that of Farhad.
A believer, yes ; no infidel am I,
Put me on whetstone, not of bad origin am I.
Though a barren tract my life has been,
I possesses the thing they call the heart.
From the world's view I have kept it concealed,
Since it bears the imprint of your horse's hoof.
Your slave begs not solace from anyone else,
Life spent away from master is veritable death.

1. The allusion is to Salahuddin.

O you who endued the Kurd with Arab's burning,
Summon your own slave to your gracious presence.
Your slave like tulip with a scarred heart,
His grief even the friends do not know.
In the world like a flute he wails and wails,
Melody stabs his heart in quick succession.
Like half-burnt firewood in the arid desert,
The caravan has gone and I smouldering still;
Waiting patiently in the wide, wild world,
That another caravan may pass along.
With the pang of separation my soul groans,
Fie upon me ! Oh fie upon me !

THE END